

Higher Education at Crossroads in Africa

I M Omari



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HIGHER EDUCATION AT CROSSROADS IN AFRICA

by

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Preface

There does not seem to be an open questioning of the value and importance of higher education, and especially university education in the development equation in African countries. The role of universities in the production of crucial human resources for the management of emergent state bureaucracies and economic structures were invariably the *prima facie* reasons for establishing universities in all these countries. However, the universally acclaimed role of universities in research, free flow of ideas across geographical, ideological, and political boundaries, their place in the articulation and dissemination of accumulated wisdom and research findings is only distantly recognized in the development equation. Further more, the strategic importance of universities and higher education in general in the fostering of technical, managerial, intellectual, and institutional capacities essential for overcoming current economic and political crises in Africa seem to be hardly reflected in resource allocation and public statements. The integration of universities into the cultural and social milieu of these countries such that they play a rightful role in culture and social political transformations is even more of a distant dream than anyone imagined before. Thus universities have so far remained enclaves and peripheral to the transformation of the state.

This is then the context of the current crisis of higher education in Africa in which the pains of growth and conversion are compounded by economic and political crises which have resulted in, or are associated with, diminished resources for higher education, a paralysis in institutional management, and a disputatious and disparate relationship between politics and education, and between the state and universities in particular. This monograph is a reflexive journey through the complexities of that crisis using data from Ethiopia, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Zambia to demonstrate the salient points of that crisis. Most of the writing was done in early 1991 when the author was a visiting adjunct Professor of Education at the University of British Columbia. The visitation was funded

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However, the views expressed in this work are those of the author and not those of institution of affiliation or sponsoring agencies.

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Introduction

The crisis in higher education in Sub-Sahara Africa has reached such proportions that one can only say it cannot get worse. It is like a spectre haunting higher education, threatening decline and institutional bankruptcy. While there are great variations in the intensity of the crisis in these African countries, most of them have similar experiences and concerns. The issues are numerous and include:

- number explosions resulting from rapid population growth and social demand;
- declining quality of teaching, research, and students;
- deterioration of institutional management and academic leadership;
- paralysis of a hierarchical, pyramidal and truncated systems of education which results in all attention being focused on an overpriced, over marketed institution = the university;
- decline in funding, both in absolute and in real dollar terms, ushered in by an acute world economic recession (Heyneman, 1990);
- indifference and negligence by governments and the international community;
- perennial student unrest and revolts against political repression, official corruption, and institutional ideologies;
- a lack of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, and confidence;
- lack of creative innovation and vision;
- disabled often non-viable internal structures in universities which favour positions rather than talents;
- academic culture based not on competence but on personal patronage;
- a crisis of the state characterized by a policy paralysis resulting from the relationship between the political evils of tyranny and anarchy on the one

hand and the economic evils of dependency and anarchy on the other (Mazrui, 1990);

- and an inward looking international intellectual community not supportive of development debates or the transfer of intellectual technologies and cultures to developing countries.

The surge of intellectual curiosity about the nature and magnitude of the crisis since the middle 1980s has been phenomenal, and associated with it are disputations regarding the causes and policy options confronting developing countries. The young universities of Africa, some of which are still suffering from both conversion and growth pains after the colonial experience of dependency and constriction (McKnown, 1975), have been the focus of so much evaluations and research of late that they are starting to suffer from the pangs of being overstudied. The inundating diversity of the studies by people and institutions, ranging from one day to several weeks of consultation, suggest different agenda, including influence, control, and dominance motives.

Some of the universities which were truly cauldrons and citadels of intellectualism have depreciated so much that visitors have called them 'crumbling ivory towers', and only 'part of the furniture' (Nahdi, 1987). These need not be the subject of inquiry any more but urgently need rehabilitative work. Their problems are very real and obvious. The present paper attempts to cast the higher education crisis in the wider context of the crisis of the state in Africa, and uses data collected from six universities to illuminate both the national and institutional parameters of the crisis in Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya, Uganda, and Ethiopia.

The Nature of the Crises: The State and Higher Education

There is now ample evidence that the contemporary economic crisis, starting from the oil crisis of the mid 1970s (Heyneman, 1990) resulted in a period of less public spending in the education sector in many developing countries such as Tanzania: (Jambo, 1988; Gallabawa, 1991 Argentina: Gertel, 1991) and Zambia (Goma, 1990). Given the increasing demands for education in countries with annual population increase of over 3 percent and a colonial experience which underdeveloped the educational sector, the proportion of annual budgets going to education needed to dramatically improve to compensate for past deprivation and negligence. Table 1 gives quite a disturbing pattern of spending in education as the budgets were either erratic or declining while the defence budgets were much higher in some of these countries. There is always something wrong when a country spends more on defence than on the education of its own people. Comprehensive analyses of this economic crisis in Africa, which was compounded by high inflation rates, currency devaluations, a rise in the prices of imports, and a decline in the prices of exports, suggest that it had differential impacts on the education sector as priorities got framed and investment choices made. While education in general was an easy target for budgetary cuts as the impacts of such measures are not quickly felt, and in any case did not threaten the immediate survival of the state, higher education was even more vulnerable to neglect and budgetary reductions due to two exogenous factors:

- An ideology which castigated higher education as being elitist, expensive, extravagant, benefiting the bourgeois class more than the peasantry. It presented a risk as it could lead to the unemployment of graduates, who can be a nuisance, if not a threat to fragile political regimes. It was said to have low social returns but high private returns as compared to other forms and levels of education (Pscharopoulos, 1990).

- An uneasy relationship between universities and the state, with both students and staff being critics of its social, political and economic policies. This often resulted in the closures of universities, and students being accused of arrogance, indifference, political posturing, and causing social instability.

These two factors plus other exigencies of developing countries, such as military coups and frequent changes in ministries of education, militated against higher education being a favoured sector in many of these countries. Likewise, key donor agencies remained quite indifferent to higher education for far too long. Therefore, while it is true that disposable resources were either stagnant or declining amidst pressures of numbers in enrolments necessitating the expansion or creation of new institutions, it can also be argued that for some countries, the crisis provided the occasion for wavering political commitment to higher education to manifest itself. With the support of an anti-higher education ideology among donor groups and United Nations agencies such as UNESCO and UNICEF, the state recoiled and moved very cautiously in providing either moral or material support for higher education.

The state of affairs cannot be explained by the number explosion in enrolments and a crippling economic crisis only, as earlier on formulated. For instance, the World Bank (1990) viewed the crisis merely as a system of higher education hard hit by declining budgets and a rapidly expanding student body. However, apart from the University of Zimbabwe (UZI) and the University of Nairobi (UNA), the other institutions in Table 2, did not experience a dramatic increase in student body. Yet research and experiences in these universities would suggest that those which had the lowest growth rates [University of Dar-es-Salaam (UDSM), University of Zambia (UNZA) Makerere University (MKU), and Addis Ababa University (ADU)] experienced the worst deterioration of both human resources and physical infrastructure.

Table 1: African Central Government Consolidated Expenditure by Selected Function, 1980-1990

Countries	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
Burkina Faso (millions of CFA francs)											
Total	261.91	300.13	372.61	401.16	526.23	642.83	909.17	1169.39	1462.90	NA	NA
% Defense	9.79	8.72	6.34	6.96	6.82	6.43	7.94	12.08	12.40	NA	NA
% Welfare	0.71	0.27	1.78	2.74	4.30	2.79	3.32	2.82	2.26	NA	NA
% Education	22.18	21.16	17.61	19.41	17.45	17.69	18.41	18.13	20.09	NA	NA
% Health	5.38	5.95	4.91	5.63	4.78	4.97	5.89	7.44	5.47	NA	NA
Ethiopia (millions of Birr)											
Total	2162.10	2223.70	2625.90	3390.00	3107.60	3709.20	3940.50	3912.10	NA	NA	NA
% Defense	41.88	40.44	36.48	35.03	34.68	28.49	25.20	29.82	NA	NA	NA
% Welfare	3.78	4.62	4.62	4.20	5.25	5.40	5.32	5.16	NA	NA	NA
% Education	9.28	9.82	10.31	8.92	10.51	9.82	9.67	10.57	NA	NA	NA
% Health	3.45	3.65	3.38	2.99	3.35	3.09	3.10	3.56	NA	NA	NA
Kenya (millions of shillings)											
Total	13615.00	16731.00	19410.00	19961.00	22014.00	25981.00	28606.00	36654.00	39968.00	NA	NA
% Defense	16.43	10.73	13.24	13.90	12.72	8.64	8.90	9.10	12.22	NA	NA
% Welfare	0.14	0.14	0.19	0.14	0.13	0.12	0.16	0.11	0.11	NA	NA
% Education	19.60	20.38	19.91	20.64	19.56	19.55	22.63	21.25	22.13	NA	NA
% Health	7.83	7.81	7.33	6.96	6.65	6.37	6.46	6.00	5.90	NA	NA
Malawi (millions of Kwacha)											
Total	347.63	393.40	359.78	415.40	473.38	608.49	742.60	841.45	1006.49	NA	NA
% Defense	12.83	8.41	7.67	6.16	5.70	5.99	6.63	5.62	5.28	NA	NA
% Welfare	1.47	1.21	1.30	1.31	1.07	0.82	0.73	0.14	0.14	NA	NA
% Education	8.98	11.06	14.26	13.39	12.33	11.03	10.79	10.05	12.30	NA	NA
% Health	5.33	5.16	5.23	6.77	7.92	6.87	7.10	5.90	7.26	NA	NA
Tanzania (millions of shillings)											
Total	12102.00	13096.00	18427.00	19299.00	21461.00	23178.00	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
% Defense	9.17	12.31	12.53	13.26	12.79	15.78	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
% Welfare	1.34	1.24	0.28	0.32	0.29	0.54	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
% Education	13.32	13.27	12.47	13.18	11.66	8.28	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
% Health	5.96	6.02	5.38	5.10	5.46	5.66	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Uganda (millions of shillings)											
Total	76.81	127.66	416.72	664.45	1151.28	2299.92	4573.09	NA	NA	NA	NA
% Defense	25.19	31.18	16.43	14.46	16.70	15.62	26.34	NA	NA	NA	NA
% Welfare	0.95	1.44	1.27	1.21	1.57	1.55	2.12	NA	NA	NA	NA
% Education	14.93	12.62	12.38	10.96	11.68	12.74	15.01	NA	NA	NA	NA
% Health	5.09	5.88	4.28	3.88	2.53	3.46	2.39	NA	NA	NA	NA
Zimbabwe (millions of Dollars)											
Total	NA	NA	1882.20	2078.60	2545.50	2617.20	3077.40	3783.40	4283.80	4980.10	NA
% Defense	NA	NA	17.26	18.34	16.23	15.54	16.49	17.12	16.31	16.49	NA
% Welfare	NA	NA	5.13	6.37	4.30	3.56	3.56	3.26	3.37	3.41	NA
% Education	NA	NA	21.87	21.49	20.38	21.02	22.21	21.04	21.96	23.45	NA
% Health	NA	NA	6.43	6.15	6.17	6.47	6.67	6.82	7.55	7.63	NA

Sources: Collated and computed from the International Monetary Fund (1990). Government Finance Statistics Yearbook, Vol. XIV, Washington, D.C.: IMF. Adapted from Ughor (1990)

Table 2: Growth in University Enrolments over Three Decades

Institution	Enrolments: Decades of Growth			Growth 1970-1990
	1970/71	1980/81	1990/91	
University of Dar-es-Salaam ¹	1,666	2,627	2,839	1.7
University of Nairobi ²	2,768	7,141	11,299	4.1
University of Zimbabwe ³	913	2,240	10,580	11.6
University of Zambia ⁴	1,748	4,081	5,000	2.9
Addis Ababa University ⁵	↔ 5000	7,000	9,860	2.0
Makerere University ⁵	↔ 3000	4,000	5,322	1.8

- Sources:
1. The Ministry of Education, *Basic Education Statistics*, (1990).
 2. The University of Nairobi Calendar (1989/90).
 3. J.L. Cefkin (1975) and University of Zimbabwe, Information Office, January 1991.
 4. UNESCO (1988).
 5. Office of the Registrar, Makerere University.
- ↔ Approximately

Therefore, while forces shaping the character of higher education such as the number and knowledge explosion, labour market demands, rising costs, equity in access to mass higher education; political pressures; student politics, and participation of junior and non academic staff in institutional governance, have been operating in varying degrees, to affect these universities, the situation in Africa needs to be viewed in its totality, taking into account the specificities of each country and each institution.

The issues which have to be considered include:

- internal institutional dynamics such as ethnic and religious conflicts which are unfortunately becoming more and more important in mediating decision making processes (Ng'weno, 1991; Mosha, 1986);
- appointment and treatment of university chief executives which has been quite humiliating as politicians appoint and fire them at will;
- melding of different training and ideological traditions;
- complacent managerial cultures lacking an awareness for efficiency, cost effectiveness;
- a technological culture devoid of maintenance and repair services (AAU, 1990; Wolholgemuth, 1990; Coombe, 1991);
- management of academic programmes using excessive and often abused participatory democracy;
- a general lack of respect and appreciation for the intelligentsia, leading to people performing their jobs in a prosaic manner rather than being excited by them;
- and a general political climate which doesn't allow for intellectual rigor, expansion, and contributory discourse while the primacy of political governance has been firmly recognized as being a key element in institutional capacity building as well as human resources development and utilization (Kwapong and Lesser, 1990).

A recent meeting of African scholars at Makerere University, Uganda, convened by the Council for Social Science Research in Africa to examine the intellectual environment in which African scholars operate observed that the intelligentsia, which produces and processes knowledge and technologies vital for development, had been thoroughly marginalized, and was at best barely acknowledged in the developmental equation (Mshindi, 1990). In a more tabloid form, Perez (1990) reported that in Mexico,

the state spent more on the upkeep of prisoners than on higher education, science and technology, suggesting that the government 'valued delinquents and scientists equally or was perhaps, unable to distinguish between them' (p.5). There is an iota of truth in this as reflected in the hefty defence budgets in some of these countries compared to educational budgets (Table 1). This results in the low earnings of professors who in Mexico, like in Tanzania and Uganda, may earn five times less than a bus driver per month. In Uganda, political cadres get a daily allowance twice the monthly salary of professors while in Tanzania, top civil servants get monthly personal allowances (over and above their salaries) greater than a professor's monthly salary (CODESRIA, 1989).

In the final analysis, it ends up being a crisis of confidence in the whole system of higher education and the intelligentsia in particular. This is reflected in weak and poorly staffed policy formulation higher education units in ministries of education. Such disabled units or directorates can neither guide institutions of higher learning, nor play an advocacy role for them. In many countries, higher education just dropped out of favour as clashes between the intelligentsia and the political elite intensified. On the academic freedom, research and social responsibility of intellectuals in Africa, the Makerere University Conference observed:

Research and teaching, which had been hitherto an isolated academic activity, entered the public domain, leading in some cases to violent clashes between the state and the intellectuals. Over the years the relationship between the state and the academic community has deteriorated dramatically. Censorship, academic repression, closure of universities, detention and deportation of staff and students have become a widespread feature of the academic environment in Africa. (CODESRIA, 1989. p.2)

Under these circumstances, the intellectual climate, in the universities becomes characterized by contradictory and conflictual traits such as apathy; fatalistic compliance and acceptance of the state of affairs; resistance; acquiescence; defiance; suspicion; and sometimes actual and violent confrontation. Without restoration of confidence and productive dialogue, mutual appreciations, and sustained advocacy for higher education, no

amount of funding can resuscitate the situation to the vibrant *Good Old Days* that every one so often talks about.

Thus, the crisis in higher education is ultimately related to the current crisis of the state characterized by military and autocratic oligarchies, all quite in antithesis to the work of universities, research, and technological innovations. The intolerance of criticisms, surveillance of academics, and suspicions about the role and intentions of higher education and research have to be replaced by a mutuality of goals and intentions. Otherwise, higher education will continue to get what the outspoken Minister of Higher Education in Zambia has called a 'starvation diet', given in the most ad hoc manner to ensure a slow but painful collapse (Goma 1989). Presumably, and if one is allowed the luxury of being optimistic, the current debate on political and economic pluralism will also usher sustained interest and informed debate on the role of universities and higher education in general. Hopefully the debate will result in intellectual pluralism which is exemplified by academic freedom, institutional autonomy, mutual appreciation, and productive dialogue. That possible trend, coupled with adequate funding seem to be the only sure path to recovery in the higher education sector.

Conditions in Universities and Current Initiatives

Unfortunately, the current plethora of studies on higher education in Africa, and in universities in particular, does not address the issue of the crisis of the state, as if the crisis of higher education was purely a technocratic issue. Under the leadership of the World Bank (1987, 1990), and an assortment of funding agencies, a variety of researchers and consultants have produced a great number of reports in an attempt to delineate the boundaries of the crisis. Using conduits such as the Association of African Universities (AAU, 1990), the World Bank, in collaboration with NUFFIC (Dutch), is focusing its attention on financial and managerial issues such as cost effectiveness and efficiency in the

operations of universities. The AAU (1990) study in eleven universities in Africa found widespread complacency in matters of efficiency and cost effectiveness, with universities allowing a proliferation of small under resourced programmes and economically non-viable administrative units such as departments and research institutes with one or two staff members only; duplication of programmes both within universities and across universities in the same country; an uncreative and unresponsive university administration; low student-staff ratios; underfunding, especially for capital development; massive brain drain among the senior and better educated staff; and a sour marriage between the state and university governance. The study concluded thus: 'The universities need to regain the initiative in reappraising their broad goals, mandates, and objectives with a view to strategize planning to improve efficiency and cost effectiveness' (p.1).

The World Bank (1990), with its massive financial and intellectual resources is already coordinating a variety of initiatives by different donor agencies, with a view to developing a comprehensive and coordinated framework for responding to the crisis. The Bank is not only interested in developing its own perspective but also wants to inform and influence governments in developing countries on how to respond to the crisis.

However, the Bank, which was responsible for the perpetuation if not the orchestration and use of the now notorious concept of *rates of return* which favoured the funding of primary and adult education at the expense of higher education, has to be associated with the most niggardly public provisions for higher education in Africa. As a banker, its entry into the current debate has to be analyzed in the context of its capitalistic, cultural, ideological, and financial hegemonic interests associated with the current lure of neoconservatism, an ideology capitalizing on the theme of the disengagement of the state from its traditional social and welfare roles. In short, it is an affront to the whole notion of a welfare state concerned with social equity and the provision for the common good. The Bank is not different from other American philanthropic institutions which Berman

(1983) called 'peddlers of untried ideologically loaded nostrums', reducing everything to technical solutions and managerial reorganization. The Bank has already concluded that: 'to reverse this trend the need for reform and innovation in higher education is crucial' (p.2). However, many of the universities currently need only basic physical and intellectual rehabilitation, restoration of confidence, reversing of the brain drain, and a variety of qualitative improvements rather than major reforms and innovations. If the universities are to be in command of their own processes of innovation, reform, and change, many will need up to five years to get basic things going before becoming involved in new reforms and innovations. Yet many of these initiatives will be contingent upon fundamental changes taking place in the state ideologies and apparatuses.

Other groups involved in the new initiatives include the Commonwealth Secretariat (CHESS, 1990) which is examining modalities for bilateral and multilateral cooperation among commonwealth countries. The Germans (DSE, 1988), on the other hand, are concentrating their attention on staff development and improvement in teaching, research, management, and institutional organizational techniques. With SIDA (Sweden), they are targeting a few universities for what has been called a 'Minimum Requirements Study on University Education' (Wohlgemuth, 1990). They contemplate extensive massive external funding of selected institutions, possibly in Mozambique, Tanzania and Zambia, a move which may just encourage dependency. It is doubtful if it is sustainable, in the long run. The British Council, on the other hand, is jumping on some quick fixes, through workshops for Vice-Chancellors, focusing on cutting down expenditures and cost recovery, instead of focusing on institutional recovery and sustainability. CIDA (Canada) and IDRC (Canada), in the meantime, are concentrating their resources on institutional and research governance and management. Likewise, philanthropic foundations (Ford and Rockefeller) are likely to adjust their research and fellowship programmes as a result of a consultancy they funded in 1990 (Coombe, 1991).

The conditions of higher education and universities are indeed worrisome. Professor Coombe, who was one time a Pro Vice-Chancellor at UNZA concluded his assessment after visiting many African universities as follows:

A sense of loss, amounting to grief as ... senior professors compare the present state of their universities with the vigour, optimism, and pride which the same institutions displayed years ago ... not just a regret or awareness that a generation of unique academic pioneers has almost run its course ... but a grim knowledge that the nature of the university experience today is profoundly different for many teachers and students, so different and so inferior that some wonder whether it can rightly be called a university experience at all (p.2).

It would seem that failure to resolve this crisis in higher education will never be attributed to a lack of concerted research efforts into it, but perhaps to ill will or a lack of desire to tackle the crises. Even so, problems already seem to emerge. While the World Bank is supposed to coordinate the external concerns and initiatives among donors, differences in delivery modalities, intellectual traditions, ideologies, and competition for influence, control and appearance seem to militate against coordination and coherence in approach to the crisis. Sooner or later donor agencies will have spent more money on research and coordination efforts than on concrete steps aimed at tackling and ameliorating the crisis. In any case, the coordination may end up in the early narrowing of options and closure, both of which may be undesirable. Ultimately it is the leaders of universities and policy makers in appropriate government units who need to make the decisions and choices that they can live with and be accountable for, rather than donor agencies who frequently change, are not accountable, and are ideologically motivated.

All evidence suggests that the crisis is not merely a result of nostalgic feelings about the deterioration of quality resulting from an expanded higher education system. In countries where there has been a massive increase in enrolments such as in Kenya, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe, there must have also been an increase in the diversity and intellectual

variance among students. The current liberalization in university life styles, dressing, and social behaviour among the youths may also make the older generation of graduates perceive the situation as reflecting a deterioration in the quality of university education and intellectual life. This happens also during the universalization of primary and secondary education and those raising issues of worsening quality are often viewed as being conservative and against the equalization of educational opportunities (Omari, 1981). Yet this crisis is very real. It has little to do with the expansion of higher education or the equalization of opportunities. While excellent students can persevere and survive hopeless academic situations, and well trained highly motivated staff may sustain basic academic standards, the questions that should be raised on the impact of this crisis have to do with the limited academic and technological exposure of the students, and the obsolete practical skills they get, all of which affect the technological future of Africa.

Basic indicators of a robust university education include retention of quality staff, vitality of the students' spirited seminars, quality publications and research outputs, stocked and up-to-date libraries and bookshops, availability of journals and laboratory equipment and materials, basic academic freedoms, and an intact physical plant. All these indicators are in the down turn in most of the institutions in the region (Court, 1990; World Bank, 1987; Mwiria, 1991; Wolholgemuth, 1990; Coombe, 1991; and Hirji, 1990). One cannot expect miracles in outcomes. As Makerere University teaching staff collectively concluded:

Evidence of that decline can be seen today in many departments and faculties, so severely understaffed and undersupplied that none can boast of being centres of producing new knowledge, the major function of a university.

(MUASA: CODESRIA Bulletin, Vol.1, 1989, p.8).

Yet all along more expectations are being stimulated and more responsibilities are being entrusted to universities. In general, higher education is expected to be at the forefront of the modernization process. The university is not supposed to be just a

technocratic institution. In fact, it occupies a strategically important position in society as it directly influences the personal lives, and the development, of the best of successive future generations, preparing them for a wide range of vocations, in virtually all positions of leadership and technical competence in the society including government, business and the professions. No country can prosper without quality university education and training. In developed countries, when significant national issues and problems arise in health, law, education, economics, constitution, or whatever, the society turns to the academics and specialists for information and counsel. In Africa, this hardly ever happens. The famous Zambian lawyer Professor Ndulo (1987) observed with respect to law, which is one of the most respectable professions: 'In most developing countries lawyers are not assigned meaningful roles in decision making processes, and the systems adopted in these countries do not allow them to play an important role' (p.96).

In addition to imparting cognitive and technical skills to students and communities, and providing for the analytical and advisory services cited, universities are expected to sharpen personal life styles and impart leadership qualities. Currently, besides the undisputable constriction and deterioration of intellectual work at universities and the lack of opportunities to offer technical and intellectual support to society, the social quality of university experiences has also been greatly eroded. Recent reviews of campus life give astonishing revelations such as: twelve students sharing a dormitory space meant for two so that they have to sleep on straw mats; lecturers selling their notes to students; teaching reduced to 'talk choke and chalk' archaic methods; students standing or sitting on the floor or climbing on walls to hear and see the lecturer; students and staff using pit latrines; students fetching water miles away as university taps are dry; eating while standing as there are no tables in cafeterias and scrambling for food in kiosks in shanty towns; and going with one meal a day. One student captured his experiences like this: 'At university I have learnt to step on people to get into lecture; to skip lecturers altogether, to avoid responsibility. That is almost worse than no education at all' (Nahdi, 1987, p.4).

Obviously this kind of situation cannot be conducive to the evolution of robust work ethics, consisting of values and beliefs relating to work as an essential human enterprise for any society wanting to feed, cloth, and reproduce itself, and rise to the challenges of survival, security and well-being (Rose, 1985). These are the very qualities and value systems that are expected of university students and staff. Things have to change. It is no good for the state to pay for an education devoid of work ethics and policies relating to social and cultural understandings so essential for the world of work. It is a waste.

All reviews of higher education in Africa come to one conclusion: 'the universities have fallen into despair compared to their rather illustrious reputations at the time of independence', (Jayox, 1989). So it is not that African governments have never had good and well functioning universities. It is a question of proper planning, management, and an appreciation of what it takes to have an effectively operating university. Higher education in Africa is being systematically marginalized such that its intellectuals are now at the periphery of the international intellectual community involved in the production and utilization of knowledge for the purpose of solving developmental problems. Institutions are starting to produce poorly trained graduates who can hardly hold down a job when and if they find one. Moreover, the dependency of African countries on expatriates is increasing, and in 1990 was costing Africa more than 4 billion dollars per year, according to World Bank (1990) estimates. This sum is paying for expatriates who are often rated as being of dubious quality. Yet developing countries are facing a massive brain drain resulting in countries such as America having a net gain in development assistance (Smithers and Pratt, 1991). Obviously, African leaders need to awaken to these realities for they threaten the very basic foundation of national independence that they have been attempting to put in place for the last three decades. Recently the well appreciated Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Sir S.S. Ramphal, addressing a group of experts from commonwealth countries formulating higher education policies and mechanism for collaboration,

concluded: 'Unless countries can develop their own intellectual infrastructure and a scientific technical capability, they cannot escape dependency and poverty' (CHESS, 1990, p.32). In fact, in all policy analyses in the West today, there is very strong consensus that if a country want to have a comparatively competitive economy, the surest way is to invest in highly trained human resources first, then in technologies, and finally in basic infrastructures such as communications, transportation, and energy. If development is to be self sustaining, quality high-level human resources are the essential, if not sufficient, factor.

The Relevant Issues Revisited

As the field of research in higher education gets muddier, there seems to be a great need to tease out the issues so that appropriate policies and action strategies are developed. Currently there is a real danger that African universities will be forced to adopt an ultra conservative intellectual and managerial ideology which in the long run will destroy them. Bankers turned scholars or vice versa, are aggressively marketing a neoconservative ideology (Psacharopoulos, 1990 a,b). As the debates proceed, policy makers will need to reflect on observations from consultants who are familiar with institutions such as the World Bank. Professor Adam (1990), taking on the World Bank by the horns remarked:

For literally decades I have been observing first-hand the failures of externally influenced educational planning in Third World countries and the remarkable tenacity with which international aid agencies cling to rationalistic planning models in the face of overwhelming evidence of their inadequacy ... For every human problem there is a solution which is neat, simple, and ... wrong.

(p.382-285).

It is important to examine the specific issues which may need to be laid to rest.

Rates of Return and Sectoral Chauvinism

The now discredited rates of return econometric jargon had advised governments to invest in primary and mass adult education as it was believed that this is where optimum returns to investments in human resources are. The World Bank and other UN agencies were central to the whole ideology of sectoral chauvinism which was associated with the populist notions of basic 'needs' (CHESS, 1990). The rates of return argument was that individuals, instead of the state benefited more from higher education while the situation was reversed for lower levels where the state benefited more than individuals. The issue was that of social versus private rates of return. The actual statistics used results from complex calculations which relied on the availability of data on incremental gains and costs to and from the state and individuals, as a result of participation in education at different levels. The statistics as orchestrated and currently used are very inconclusive, suspect, and at best spurious. Critical reviews of the use of the rate of return technique in Africa by experts who are familiar with it (Hinchliffe, 1987; Paulston, 1990; Maliyamkono, 1987) firmly conclude that the indices were unreliable in African situations due to imperfections of market dynamics while the indices rely on the power of supply and demand in literate industrial settings. The underemployment of primary school leavers and the existence of subsidies, wage controls, and underemployment of graduates, renders attempts to compute costs and earnings meaningless. Hinchliffe (1987) concludes that, 'existing studies are insufficient for evaluating investments in higher education and the labour market facing present and future graduates' (p.52). Gareth (1984), a renowned human capital economist, problematized the human capital theory, which is the genesis of the concept of rates of return, by pointing out the competing views from educators and sociologists who contend that the differential returns by levels of education could be reflecting the effects of screening and credentials rather than inherent quality differences in schooling outcomes. He observes that, given the many unemployed graduates, yet increasing demand for university education, the human capital criteria for investment in education will not gain

intellectual and political appeal except among economists who find theoretical support in it. Gareth concludes: 'The relationship between private returns to higher education and the demand for it by individuals in conditions of uncertainty and imperfect information remains to be properly explored' (p.83).

Of course economists like Psacharopoulos are more concerned with advising policy makers on how to distribute their preferences among competing ways of spending money. They always need the counter balances of political scientists who are concerned with political signals in voting patterns and interest group behaviours. Educators, on the other hand, are concerned about long-term, broad educational goals which cannot be reduced to the parameters of the rates of return argument. In developing countries where interest group behaviours and voting patterns have been either muzzled or greatly interfered with, and technical advice greatly disregarded, the counterbalances may be quite subdued. Therefore, it is not surprising that during times of scarcity, economists may have an upper hand but in the process pervert the broad and long-term philosophical, social, and communal goals of education (Levy, 1986).

The rates of return argument, capitalizing on efficiency in investments in human capital, either by calculation or inadvertently, diverted resources to lower levels of education. As a result, many countries are currently paying a price for this and economic advisers seem not to be accountable. However, the pendulum is swinging back as the rhetoric about higher education being expensive, elitist, extravagant, wasteful, inequitable (benefiting predominantly the middle and upper classes) wanes (CHESS, 1990). Hopefully, the resurgence of interest in higher education will firmly re-establish the interdependency of educational tiers. In fact, many protagonists of sectoral chauvinism in favour of primary and adult mass education are now thoroughly disappointed with their investments in primary education as illiteracy persists or increases, drop out rates climb, poor quality persists among students and teachers, and infrastructures crumble (Reimers, 1991).

The practice of comparing the unit cost of higher education as multiples of either per capita incomes or the unit costs of other levels and forms of education, which always reflect badly on higher education where unit costs are very high (World Bank, 1987) need to be re-examined so that each level is assessed on its own merit rather than in comparison to another level. In any case the disparity reflects underfunding of primary education rather than excessive funding of universities. In a recent meeting of higher level policy makers, scholars, and donor agencies at Oxford University, England, where the World Bank pushed the same argument of higher education being too expensive and less cost efficient, it was unanimously concluded that: 'African countries can spend 20-25 percent of their tight budgets on one percent of the population. Yet the idea that higher education was a luxury that Southern countries could not afford was totally rejected. The benefits to local development and independence were incalculable' (Davies and Harber, 1990, p.91). It is becoming increasingly clear that rates of returns differ with levels of development of a country and that the arguments are hardly used in investment patterns in developed countries which are investing massively in higher education, even when they have unemployment of university graduates.

The Unemployment Issue

Some African countries such as Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Senegal, Nigeria, and Cameroon are already facing unemployment of university graduates, and alarmed by this phenomenon, may in haste either cut down university enrolments or introduce regressive measures such as tuition fees and student loans so as to moderate the demand for higher education. Yet that path does not help troubled national economies which need appropriate stimulation and better management. In fact, there is overwhelming evidence that countries which over-produce graduates without strict manpower plans are doing better in the employment of graduates than those which attempt to curtail demand for higher education (Psacharopoulos, 1990). There is also evidence that while expanded higher education does not tamper with

class structure or reduce social economic disparities, as these depend on property ownership and reproduction and distributive social policies, it widens the base for political and managerial participation and increases economic competitiveness (Beredy 1977; Mendiola, 1989). It is the resultant confrontation between those who want to use education for access and ascent to elite privileges and those from the privileged class who see education as legitimizing their current hold on power which is crucial in modernization. In short, university education may not act as a class leveller but it is the most powerful path for expanding the modernizing middle class. Furthermore, evidence shows that the unemployment of graduates is short-term and any frustration is because of historical practices of guaranteed jobs. Sooner or later people learn to be self reliant and creative in getting economically productive activities to do, either in the formal or informal sector. Thus modest and continuous expansion of higher education, even when there is unemployment of graduates, is beneficial to the economy and the social set up of a given country. The worrying part is the fact that unemployment coexists with many vacancies in the economy. One wonders if this reflects pathologies in university education or if it is a more pervasive problem relating to the structure of the economies and employment settings, whereby multiple small pockets of the modern sector coexist with more primitive economies which lack robust tertiary institutions for recurrent education, and have employers who do not provide on-the-job training programmes.

The Concept of a University

African countries need to renew and accept a dynamic but stable concept of a university. Historically and spatially, notions of a university have been changing and African countries cannot be the exception. The problem is the lack of a stable image of what a university in Africa should be and the role it should play. Historically, the concept of a university went through phases as it extracted itself from the church. A university was initially seen as a village of priests, then as an industrial town of an intellectual oligarchy, finally, and with

tremendous overlaps, it was perceived as a city of an infinite variety of offerings as it became larger and more heterogenous, hence the concept of a 'multiversity', often associated with a knowledge industry.

A university is also perceived differently in various countries, such that in:

- Russia = as a production factory;
- France = an intellectual mould;
- U.S.A. = a centre of progress;
- Germany = a research community;
- U.K. = an educational environment.

Likewise, different intellectual traditions perceive a university differently such that one gets an image of it as:

- a capstone of the research establishment;
- a microcosm of culture in a given society;
- an adjunct to the establishment;
- a radical critic of society or its conscience;
- a humanitarian closet in chief;
- a therapeutic community, meeting the psychic needs of students and the intelligentsia.

The problem with several African universities is that of blending and moulding these traditions, images, and cultural visions into coherent principles which guide both policy and operations of the institutions. Nyerere (1964), who many Tanzanians might never duly appreciate because they may never know the full extent of his services as a man of great intellect and walking contradictions, was quite ambivalent, when as the first President of

Tanzania, he rejected the liberal concept of a university. Instead he favoured a utilitarian conception of a university as a functional institution committed to the service of society and to the production of greatly needed high level human resources. He also had enough vision to perceive a university as a lifelong permanent national resource. Thus he allowed the construction of an ultramodern university scornfully called the 'Ivory Tower' and affectionally referred to as 'The Hill'. Today Nahdi (1987) could only refer to it as 'A Crumbling Ivory Tower' (p.39).

There have been efforts to redefine and refine concepts and boundaries of university functions in Africa, oscillating from liberal to revolutionary notions of a university. The concept currently in vogue is that of a 'development university', articulated by the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Zimbabwe, Professor Walter Kamba, to mean a commitment to integrating academic excellence with development consciousness (Lesser, 1988). Attempts at revolutionary delinking of African universities from global knowledge movements and especially from capitalist hegemony have faced serious reversals in China (Hayhoe, 1989; Sidel, 1977), in Tanzania (Omari, 1991), and worldwide (Samoff, 1991). Professor Vitta (1980) lamented the situation at the university of Dar-es-Salaam this way: 'The university has been redefined to a point where it now believes itself to be just another parastatal organization, and worse has begun to behave like one' (p.13). But universities by mission, mandate and functions cannot be treated like parastatals as that would be dangerously misguided. They would end up being judged on some short-term criteria while universities need longer gestation periods to realize their missions in terms of both manpower production and the utilization of research results. Likewise the work habits and training required of their personnel are different.

Indeed, African universities will need to go back to the 1962 UNESCO direction that the African university is an international entity, having accepted the basic pattern and characteristics of the university as a world institution (Cameron, 1987). While it is

recognized that universities have local and national responsibilities they also hold allegiance to a universality which transcends national boundaries, in terms of their basic functions of teaching, research, human resources development, cultural stimulation, articulation of national images, and service. They cannot insulate themselves from a universal acclaim as members of a worldwide academic community committed to scholarship and appropriate prestige. It is high time African leaders decided if they want to have universities and remain on the map, or have glorified high schools or community colleges and disappear from the world map of universities and the global knowledge movement. Given the cognitive malleability of man and intellectual diversity in universities, one cannot see any obvious and necessary contradiction between universal acclaim and nationalism as Matte (1990) would like to suggest, and thus there is no great need to overplay the concept of a developmental university. The university will remain what Professor Mazrui (1978) called a 'multinational entity' specializing in global knowledge accumulation, generation, articulation, and similarly expect to handle contradictions and conflicts in material, cultural, and intellectual reproduction (Kellner, 1989).

All countries go through some phases of redefining their institutions but it is important to remember Professor Cotes (1973) admonition that 'if inefficiency diminishes the usefulness of the university, subversion of its functions destroys it entirely' (p.69). There is a real danger of doing exactly that in many African countries, that is, governments may pervert, subvert, and destroy the university as an institution. This is particularly serious where there is only one university, facing both financial dependency and political subjugation as is the case in Tanzania (Malekela, 1988). Universities are not being given a chance to redefine themselves. In Africa there is too much interference and control of universities by governments and political parties. This does not seem to be the correct path either.

A System of Higher Education

Various reviews in Zambia (Haamujompa, 1985) suggest that most African countries have no comprehensive systems of higher education. The universities were established as separate and independent entities, admitting students directly from the secondary school system. When sectoral ministries established their own institutes such as for agriculture, pedagogy, finance, commerce, water, and land surveying, these became independent of the university system, and people from these institutions could not get a qualification allowing them to join the university system. When some countries, such as Tanzania, tried to allow for multiple student recruitment institutions for university admission, it was a one way affair, as universities did not have any linkage with other tertiary institutions. Therefore, the universities remained enclaves or what are popularly called 'ivory towers' which did not enjoy any natural or reciprocal relationship with other intellectual, social, or cultural communities. When the pressure of numbers set in, it was the universities which were expected to absorb them and when the economic crisis set in, it was the universities which were politically vulnerable to budgetary cuts. Societies likewise increased pressure on them to justify their very special position in society (Goldschmidt, 1987).

At the same time, political systems have not been interested in strong linkages between universities and other tertiary institutions as this will dilute their power and control of them. Likewise, universities have not been keen as they fear a dilution of standards of university education. Yet it is structurally quite attractive and economically efficient that higher education should comprise of three interlinked levels. One level would be the university system which should concentrate on broad intellectual skills. The second level would be comprehensive but decentralized junior colleges similar to polytechnics, which would offer basic courses in the natural sciences, social sciences, and the arts; preparatory education for universities; occupational programmes; cultural and continuing education programmes. These would be flexible community based institutions serving local, regional,

and national interests in that order of preference. Then, finally, there should be institutes of technology which would have both terminal education and preparatory programmes for university entry. A comprehensive system like this, arrived at through a consensus, would ease current pressures on universities. This would also help to rationalize, through structuralization and mergers, the whole higher education system such that efficiency and economies of scale can be achieved (Scott, 1989). These linkages may then be extended to other and appropriate research and training institutions on one hand, and strong units of higher education in ministries dealing with education, science and technology on the other. Indeed without strong policy formulation and review units in appropriate ministries, higher education will remain without advocacy or guidance.

Likewise, the university planning offices need to be revamped into key units for both short-term and long-term planning, and for monitoring the operations of universities. One of the often observed weaknesses of African universities is the lack of basic data and information for comprehensive budgeting, planning, and corporate management (CHESS, 1990; AAU, 1990). Without simultaneous strengthening of higher education policy analysis units in the appropriate ministries, and planning wings in universities it is difficult to see how the crisis in higher education can be alleviated.

Influencing the Future Agenda

The current crisis in higher education has ushered in fierce debates both at the level of diagnosis of the situation and in the suggested remedies for the malaise. The problem with these debates is that they are conducted outside the realm of long-term social policies, and the current vacuum created by the collapse of the competing socialist ideology of the Eastern block make the debates one-sided as contraries are not effective any more. This situation is particularly dangerous because some of the progressive social policies which were rational and essential for balanced and equitable social development are being swept

under the carpet of the hegemony of conservative capitalism. It seems that developing countries have to articulate both short-term policies meant to respond effectively to the current crisis and long-term social policies to be put in place when not constrained by a recession inspired crisis in higher education. Unless such a distinction is made confusion will reign. Currently the neoconservatives are using economic and cultural hegemonic interests formulated in technical terms to give their positions a semblance of ideological neutrality. It is becoming increasingly clear, however, that there is no ideology as constraining as the one which says there is no ideology in whatever positions are advanced. The Bank's message is simple: privatize higher education and let market forces operate, the state should pay less and individuals more. The marketing of a conservative ideology is so fierce that the World Bank is almost in all academic conferences and journals trying to convince intellectuals to buy their baggage of diagnoses and solutions to the crisis. Such was the case with the conferences on *Development Through Education* [Psacharopoulos, 1990 (a)] and *Comparative Education Colloquy* [Psacharopoulos, 1990 (b)]. When it was thoroughly rebuffed in these two academic settings, the Bank resorted to other methods of influence and control. Through its financial resources, it is presently commissioning and editing papers of like minds, as may be seen in *Higher Education*, Vol.21, 1991. In the process, the editor accepts data and opinions of dubious authority. In this way the Bank is using caustic methods which allow for unattributed and uncorroborated assertions without context and critical evaluations. For instance, in the case of Tanzania, Gallabawa (1991) is concerned that higher education 'consumed 13.1 percent of the recurrent budget' (p.52). Yet Kenya was spending over 30 percent in 1987/88 out of a national commitment to education (Aringo, 1991). Gallabawa goes on to say, 'In a recent economic survey it has been noted that whereas in 1970/71 13.68 percent of government expenditure went towards education and 7.05 percent to the military, in 1986/87, 6.45 percent went to education with 14.58 going to the military (p.53)'. Readers are not told which survey and of which year, and whether the figures refer to the total annual budget or recurrent budget, and whether the figures were computed with or without a debt servicing fund, which makes a significant

difference. In checking further, these figures are from an MSc thesis (Jambo, 1988) which was citing another source called Manumbu (1988). Yet the official figures from the Ministry of Education were 7.9 percent for the 1986/87 recurrent budget and not 6.45. One wonders which sources should be relied upon?

The budget proportions, when related to the total annual budget may be a spurious indicator since capital expenditures vary from year to year, given changing priorities, varying project implementation schedules, and limited finances. Psacharopoulos (1991) uses more global indicators such as public spending on education either as a percentage of GNP or of the total public budget. He finds it difficult to believe that Africa countries can afford to spend over 20 percent of their annual recurrent budgets on education, because that would be higher than what developed countries are spending. However, it is now widely acknowledged that the proportions of GNP invested in human resources, and especially in higher education depends very much on the level of development of a given country and the social policies being pursued. In developed countries, where there is unemployment of people with doctoral and masters degrees, and the education system well established with universities already in place, the investment policies in human resources will be different from countries where there is an acute shortage of secondary school teachers, agricultural scientists, medical and health personnel, and especially experts in mathematical, engineering, and computer sciences. The now famous 1990 Swiss inspired *World Competitive Report* by the World Economic Forum and the International Management Development Institute, focusing on national competitiveness made one important conclusion that developing countries need to take seriously: 'It is those countries that are investing in research and development today that will command tomorrow' (p.35). Developing countries need to have higher proportions of their budgets devoted to human resources rather than thinking of reducing them. The issue then remains that of using scarce resources more efficiently rather than doing more with less.

Although, as Professor Coombe (1991) observes, the World Bank image is already damaged by the joint use of its enormously complex financial resources and intellectual power to dominate the debate on higher education, it is important to appreciate the potential for conflict of interest here. The Bank is closely associated with the structural adjustment policies and programmes in education and is currently funding huge projects in Ghana, Nigeria, and Kenya. For a long time the Bank was at the centre of sectoral chauvinism in education which favoured lower and adult education at the expense of higher education, which apparently have not gotten any better as the quality of primary education has deteriorated even more dramatically and the previously literate population has slipped back into illiteracy. It is quite obvious that the Bank is re-examining its lending policies in higher education as opposed to searching for social policies, while education is fundamentally a social enterprise. The potential for a conflict of interests is particularly worrisome, especially when double standards are used. The Bank had earlier on been unable to fund higher education in much of Africa except in ultra conservative regimes such as Zaire and Senegal. Elsewhere it has been doing so in the repressive regimes of Asia such as Korea and Indonesia, resulting in the current asymmetrical intellectual and economic relations between South-East Asia and Africa. African countries might now be forced to institute policy reforms which may only result in increased dependency and a debt burden. The whole debate needs to be cast in the context of the privatization ideology, and hard questions have to be raised. For instance: Privatize for whose choice and interest? How far can or should the state abdicate all or some of the traditional social and welfare responsibilities? Can market forces respond equitably and in a non paternalistic manner to diverse national interests? Most of what are called private universities in America and Japan rely heavily on state subsidies and other intervention mechanisms. Developed countries such as Canada and Britain have hardly any significant private university. Why Africa?

The World Bank Diagnosis

According to the World Bank (1990), the contribution of higher education to development is threatened by four factors, all which may be reduced to technical parameters:

Outputmix: It is not responding to job markets and the requirements of a developing economy, as one gets unemployment of graduates and many job vacancies in the same country at the same time. Yet even developed countries such as Canada, U.S.A., U.K. and Sweden have the same problem of a lack of people in the sciences, computer technologies, and engineering while many graduates remain unemployed.

The quality of outputs (graduating students): This is of doubtful value as they cannot do the jobs they are supposed to do but yet many are given jobs which do not need a university education (Hughes, 1983).

Unit costs: These are unnecessarily high, and since all funding is from the state, it puts an unnecessary strain on public budgets which are already over stretched. Yet Heyneman (1990) gives a range of \$80 to \$2,257 per student recurrent expenditure in low income countries and industrialized countries respectively.

Financing of higher education: This is inherently inequitable due to a general subsidization which favours the rich class, and is economically inefficient since it does not regulate demand towards needy sectors of the economy. Yet this is what is happening almost worldwide, especially in developed countries.

This diagnosis is by itself quite controversial. It tends to give a false impression of what is going on in the field of education all over the world. It portrays and adduces certain

pathological features as being specific to the African situation. For instance, there are many first degree graduates in North America who cannot hold on to a job and hence they are unemployed. It is now estimated that in the year 2000, America will have a shortage of about 500,000 people in the sciences, engineering, and computer fields, while Canada will experience a shortage of 30,000 people in the same fields (Mullins, 1990). To get a job in North America these days one needs a second degree and an area of specialization. The point is that these are not unique pathologies of higher education in Africa.

Table 3 gives enrolments by broad disciplines in five universities, but does not give employment possibilities. However, the usual areas where vacancies obtain are in the sciences and the emerging fields such as engineering; computers; biotechnologies like manufacturing, textiles, communications and design; policy analysis; teaching; and cultural fields such as music and the performing arts. Yet many of these fields cannot wholly be filled with people who have just completed their first degree. There will be need for, first a re-examination of jobs which need a university degree and those which do not. Secondly, a massive expansion of graduate programmes is required. Thirdly, development of more specialized short cycle training courses in tertiary institutions and in industry for both initial training and upgrading of skills is essential. Legitimate questions can also be raised as to whether universities are the best place for training people for specific jobs or, indeed, by their very nature are meant to produce people with broader managerial skills. Some countries such as Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe are facing a shortage of appropriate candidates for university education. Therefore, any analysis of the problem of higher education without appreciating and studying their interlinkages with secondary school and other institutions will remain incomplete. In effect constricted enrolments in secondary schools in Tanzania have resulted in university skewed student-staff ratios as low as 4:1 (Hinchliffe, 1985), and a serious shortage of qualified applicants in the sciences (Etten and Hordijk, 1983). In the other countries, the sciences seem to be quite strong. Some of these countries, like Nigeria (Shittu, 1990), have decided to tilt the enrolments in favour of the

Table 3: Total Enrolments by Broad Disciplines (graduates in parentheses) 1989 Figures

Disciplines of Study	Institutions and Enrolments				
	Addis Ababa ⁶	Dar-es-Salaam	Makerere	Nairobi	Zimbabwe ²
Natural Sciences	2326 (104)	413 (72)	813 (55)	1396 (254)	970
Social Sciences	2021 (51)	1060 ² (122)	1122 (18)	(³)	1570
Agriculture (Plants & Animals)	592 (0)	500 ⁴	301 (0)	844 (213)	370
Engineering & Technology	1161 (11)	604 (44)	243 (0)	852 (59)	2650 ⁷
Education	1256 (27)	In Social Sciences	1231 (373)	600 (87) ¹	900
Medical Health	1630 (186)	397 (107)	476 (60)	1642 (273)	820
Law	244 (0)	226 (29)	197(0)	580 (6)	325
Cultural Sciences	521 (52)	In Social Sciences	489 (10)	3278 (351)	1450
Commerce	In Social Sciences	378 (36)	260 (0)	848 (41)	1180

Notes

1. Kenya has a university specializing in paedological sciences (Kenyatta University) with over 5000 students, and two other public universities with education faculties (Egerton and Moi Universities).
2. Graduate statistics not available yet.
3. Included in a college of Arts in a new decentralized structure = cultural sciences.
4. Now a university of its own with same level of enrolment.
5. Includes Education Students (about 300) and Arts and Cultural Studies students.
6. Ethiopia has a University of Agriculture at Alemaya which was until recently a college of the Addis Ababa University.
7. Includes a new College of Technology which awards a degree.

Sources: Registrars Office in each University

sciences at 60:40 ratio. Yet each country faces unique problems that may not be solved by formulas and ratios. For instance, in Tanzania, one of the main problems is both a limited expansion of university enrolment due to awkward and outdated manpower planning policies and a lack of qualified science teachers in the secondary school system (Etten and Hordijk, 1983).

At this juncture serious questions about the purpose and mission of university education need to be raised before enrolment ratios are fixed. For instance:

- Should universities be primarily for the preparation of people for a job market? Economists would like to take such a view but this is not the only purpose of university education. Such an emphasis may pervert the other goals of university education such as the development of broad thinking skills and self actualization. In fact, the trend today is to have broad university programmes that enable individuals to have double majors (social sciences and natural sciences) for the same degree rather than narrowly focused specializations. Thus industry and non degree short cycle programmes will have to be designed to meet emergent employment avenues rather than tampering with basic university programmes. While the university curriculum should be constantly reviewed to keep it up-to-date and relevant. It cannot be tied to the job market for this may deprive university education a needed amount of dynamism and flexibility.
- Should educators allow an evolution of science programmes at the expense of the social and cultural sciences? Obviously there is room to differ here. First, on matters of principle, this might amount to curtailment of individual freedoms for students to pursue studies of their

liking and inclination in terms of interest and abilities. This point will be even important if and when individuals pay fees. They have to have diversity and free choice. Secondly, there are many developmental problems which require mundane managerial skills and attitudinal orientations rather than a specific science degree. Likewise, both the cultural aspects of life and self employment will need to be catered for. This is not to suggest that the sciences should not be expanded in accordance with employment possibilities but rather that this cannot be done at the expense of the social and cultural sciences, otherwise we shall be back to the traditions of rigid sectoral chauvinism. Countries like Zimbabwe, Kenya, and Ethiopia might not be facing a question of numbers of input in the sciences but the quality of outputs which may be deteriorating. On the other hand, occupations such as teaching may not be attractive when the market is saturated, as it is the case in Kenya.

Costs and Related Financial Issues in Higher Education

The most contentious issue in the whole crisis of higher education has been severally cited as inadequate and adhocratic financing of higher education. This section will consider issues relating to costs, funding strategies, cost sharing, and remunerations for staff.

The Issue of Unit Costs

Table 4 compares the unit costs for local students consisting of basic tuition fees, room and board expenses, excluding pocket and transport allowances. It does not seem that unit costs are as high as the World Bank would like us to believe. For instance, for Tanzania and Zimbabwe, Hinchliffe (1985) gives a figure of US \$8661 and \$11,081 respectively. The current figures in Table 3 from the respective university calendars are much lower than

both sets and one wonders which items were included in these earlier calculations. In Canada, where university education is also heavily subsidized, the unit costs are almost four times as much and those in the selected African universities and there is a great pressure against any increase in fees (Strangwau. 1991). Therefore the issue that the unit costs are too high in Africa may not arise unless it is only made in the context of a fees ideology. Indeed, in some of these universities, unless the unit costs improve, the quality of education cannot improve as the general teaching and learning environment has also dramatically deteriorated. Some of us with experience in funding students in African universities know that even for graduate level studies, it does not cost \$11,081 in Zimbabwe per year. One wonders where Hinchliffe (1985) got his figures as they seem very unrealistic. Further discussions with the Bank in May 1991 on the issue of unit costs suggested that the Bank has no guidelines on how they were computed.

There is always a problem of an understanding of the basis for the computation of unit costs. Should one use the total university annual budget divided by the number of students or only the operating budget divided by the number of students or do the gazetted fees reflect what a university thinks is the cost of keeping a student per year? As such, cynics have commented that African universities don't know their unit costs for sure! Use of the operating budget would be ideal but universities differ on what is to be included in this and it also varies year to year. Thus fees in calendars seem to be the most logical and reliable piece of public information. The unit costs in African universities are viewed as too high given the low salary scales of the teaching staff who ordinarily should consume between 70 and 80 percent of any university recurrent budget. Yet many African universities have a large number of expensive expatriate staff. The unit costs are also high as multiples of either per capita incomes or unit costs in the lower levels of schooling. However, the question should be: Where does the money go rather than why the unit costs are high.

Table 4: Comparative Undergraduate Fees in Three African Universities and Three Canadian Universities (exchange rates given in parenthesis)*

Name of Institution	In local Currency	In US Dollars
University of Dar-es-Salaam	Tsh 581,020 ¹	\$ 2955 (196.6)
University of Nairobi	Ksh 43,700 ²	\$ 1865 (23.10)
University of Zimbabwe	Z\$ 4,000 ³	\$ 1626 (2.46)
University of British Columbia	Cd\$ 8,015 ⁴	\$ 6575 (1.18)
University of Alberta	Cd\$ 11,096 ⁵	\$ 9123 (1.18)
McMaster University	Cd\$ 10,000 ⁶	\$ 8200 (1.18)
Addis Ababa University	Birr 6,690 ⁷	\$ 3232 (2.07)
University of Zambia	ZK 12,000 ⁸	\$ 380 (31.62)
Makerere University	Ush 186,400 ⁹	\$ 424 (440)

* Note: Exchange Rates given in *The I.M.F. International Financial Statistics*, Vol.XLIV (3), 1991. Rates are for July - September, 1990 period averages.

Source:

1. *University of Dar-es-Salaam Prospectus*, Dar-es-Salaam University Press, 1990.
2. *1989/90 University of Nairobi Calendar*, University of Nairobi, Registrars Office.
3. *University of Zimbabwe 1991 Calendar*, University of Zimbabwe, Information Office.
4. *1991/92 Undergraduate Admission Guide*, The University of British Columbia, Registrars Office.
5. *Admissions Information 1991*, The University of Alberta, Registrars Office.
6. *McMaster Year Handbook 1991*, Division of Student Liaison, 1991.
7. Office of the Dean of Graduate Studies, Addis Ababa University, February, 1990.
8. Republic of Zambia: Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology. *New Measures for the Financing of Higher Education*, April, 1989.
9. Office of the Registrar, Makerere University, January, 1990.

For many universities in Africa, if they are to retain quality staff and give quality education, the unit costs may have to go up rather than down. In this context, workshops geared towards cost reduction or recovery instead of institutional recovery (British Council,

1990) may exacerbate the deterioration of quality. By concentrating only on the effective use of existing resources and maximization of non-governmental resources in the form of cost reduction and income generation, one may end up pounding on already underfunded universities. Any moves that absolves African governments the responsibility for giving its people affordable quality education in most equitable manner need to be checked. The question should be that of how these governments and other funders (donors and their governments) can raise more funds for these universities. The needs are great and urgent action is required if many of these institutions of higher learning are to regain their positions in an international community of universities.

The World Bank (1987) is advising African governments to walk out of higher education and let individual beneficiaries pay. The reasoning is that the state cannot pay more than what it is doing now. Yet it does not raise more serious questions about the nature of the state in Africa. Other agencies such as those of the United Nations have tended to be more overtly critical of the state than the World Bank. For instance, the UNDP report of 1991 (Howard, 1991) was quite revealing thus:

What is lacking is the political will to see existing capital used more efficiently by cutting the military budgets, wasteful public spending, vain projects and corruption, and the abusive lending practises of the Western donors ... A simple freeze in the military budgets of developing countries would save more than \$ 10 billion a year from being spent on weapons of mass destruction ... less than 25 percent of total foreign assistance is going to social spending, and of that amount only one third goes to health, education, and family planning ... Africa, which has become the continent most in need of aid receives more than \$ 6 billion in so called technical assistance, but too much is spent on foreign experts and too little on building up local institutions and national consultants (p.1-3).

Education in Africa should not lose when other sectors are wasteful. The Bank and other donor agencies have to come to grips with the political context of higher education funding, and African governments have to take such criticisms more seriously.

Funding Strategies

Traditionally, education in general and higher education in particular is to a large extent funded by the state in all countries of the world. The level of state contribution to the funding of higher education varies from about 75 percent in Japan to 100 percent in several countries (Clark, 1983) with America and Europe (not U.K.) averaging 85 percent. The balance is covered from a variety of sundry sources such as tuition fees, contributions from industry and foundations. The assumption that the share of non governmental contributions can be increased is based on the existence of:

- a large middle and upper class that values higher education and thus pays for it;
- a large private sector which is willing to invest in higher education;
- large financial and philanthropic foundations keen to fund university education and research.

It is quite evident that these conditions do not obtain in many African countries. The current arguments for the introduction or increase of user (tuition) fees in higher education is often posed in the context of improving social and economic efficiency in financing higher education, but in actuality is an affront on a progressive ideology that had upheld that free and equitable education was a sacrosanct communal responsibility of the state (Hyder, 1987). The neoconservatives are advocating the disengagement of the state from this responsibility, eschewing a radical capitalistic ideology which blindly entrusts the crisis of higher education to the whims of market forces. Yet most developed countries fully fund their universities and uphold the principle that higher education should be accessible to all applicants who qualify by ability and aspiration, irrespective of the ability to pay. In fact, in modern democracies, no political leaders can survive the competitive electoral process on a neo conservative ideology which limits opportunities to higher education

through user fees. Even Margaret Thatcher could not survive. There is hardly any challenge to the principle that it is the responsibility of the state to provide quality education on equitable terms, except within the group of vocal neoconservatives who espouse a very individualistic ideology which borders on anarchy. The danger in African countries is that you only need to convince the top leadership, composed of the President and the Minister of Education, that the new ideas are universal and neutral. Given the nature of the state in Africa, primarily military or one party dictatorship, an ultra conservative ideology can easily find roots there, but with a potential for disaster.

In any case, not in a single country in the world do user fees constitute more than 15 percent of the operating budgets of universities, except in a few exclusive private universities which do not enrol more than 15 percent of the student population in institutions of higher learning (McConnell, 1971). Thus, user fees are really not substitutes for state funding of universities but rather supplemental inputs to increase managerial flexibility in the improvement of learning and teaching environments, and in the provision of student services such as financial aid, loans, and scholarships (Strangway, 1991). In fact, a recent OECD sponsored report on International Competitiveness pointed out that the challenge to the state is to invest more on high level human resources so as to remain competitive rather than to spend less on higher education. The ideology of spending less was only part of Reaganomics and Thatcherite ideology which could easily be a passing cloud.

One is therefore amazed by the way user (tuition) fees arguments are presented in developing countries. It is done in the context of cost recovery, cost reduction, and in the spirit of relieving the state of the burden of giving quality, affordable, and equitable education to its people. Since nowhere in the world have tuition fees represented a significant portion of investments in education, it would be unfortunate if donor agencies push African governments, through their conditionalities, to abandon their sacred duty to

provide affordable quality education to their populations. The argument for tuition fees is premised on the following points, according to Psacharopoulos (1991), Fine (1990) and Gallabawa (1991):

- The governments were already spending over five percent of the Gross National Products on education, and up to 15 percent of their annual budgets were going to education, up to 20 percent of which goes to higher education. Subjectively these are perceived to be higher limits than the state can currently afford, given the excess demand for higher education fuelled by its cheapness, the narrow taxation base, the inelasticity and poor collection of taxes, and mismanagement of financial resources. In addition, they argue, it is more economical to invest in primary education than in higher education.
- Since globally there is an over-representation in the participation rates of the small upper and middle classes in higher education, as compared to the lower classes (farmers and peasants), it is inefficient for the state to use general subsidization that also covers the rich who can pay for these services. There are thus inbuilt inequities since the 'haves' are getting even more from the state coffers. Characteristically, Beredy (1977) estimates that 50 percent of all university students come from the middle and upper class, which constitute only 20 percent of the population in many countries. The fact that the 20 percent can pay more, and that it is in an exploitative relationship with the rest of society, is often not raised.

On these accounts then, the proposition is that states should charge fees as a way of reducing costs of higher education, and also using human capital notions, recover investments to education, and in the process share the burden of education with those who

will benefit from it. However, the argument for tuition fees has to be seen in the wider context of privatization of higher education as they represent either net additions of private resources as a substitute for public resources or just net additions of private resources to higher education (Geiger,1988). Thus, in the wider context of privatization as an alternative funding mechanism , one has to consider a number of sources.

Private Institutions. The establishment of private universities is now being actively considered in Kenya and Zimbabwe. Yet nowhere have private universities enrolled more than 15 percent of the higher education students. People should, therefore, not be diverted from the larger pie in pursuit of a smaller one. The politics of private universities are such that they tend to be secretarian, regional, often focusing on a constricted clientele, and they thus invite ethnic concentration. In African countries they have to prove that they can give quality, affordable and equitable education, consistent with the overall social policy of a given country. Yet countries such as U.K., Canada, and South Africa do not have any significant private universities. It does not seem that private universities, even when allowed to operate, will provide a solution to the crisis of higher education in Africa.

Private Sector Contributions to Specific Programmes. In rich countries, private companies can sponsor and fund joint university programmes and the so called philanthropic foundations can make contributions to specific university programmes and projects. Yet these contributions are minimal compared with the general university budgets. In addition, universities in Latin America are experiencing undue influence from such sources and fear that significant inputs from the private sector will come with strings that may tamper with the autonomy and academic freedoms of the institutions and their staff. Such contributions are a last resort, and a quite unreliable source for that matter.

Increase in Government Funding. Indeed it would be suicidal for universities and policy makers to accept the position that governments are already playing a sufficient role in the

funding of higher education. There are wide variations in government investments in human resources, ranging from a mere 5.9 percent of annual recurrent budgets in Tanzania (Ministry of Education, 1990) to 37 percent in Kenya (Editor, 1991). The World Bank gets alarmed when governments are spending 15 percent of their annual budgets on education (Psacharopoulos, 1991), yet many western countries and states invest more than that proportion (Mullins, 1990). In Africa, all options have to be left open since some states, as they recover from the economic recession, can afford more investments in human resources so as to achieve regional and international competitiveness in business, human resources, and technological innovations. Hard questions have to be asked about the nature of the state too.

- How can presidents raise enormous funds for their pet projects such as national cars, world class churches, Papal visits, monuments, and not for higher education?
- How can states allocate resources for prestigious 'white elephants' such as airports, airlines, hotels, new ministries, (e.g., having two ministries of education such as higher and lower) wasteful parastatals, many embassies, new capital cities, and state lodges, and not for higher education?
- How can states maintain huge armies, security services, police, and militias during peace time, and not invest more in higher education? In any case, much of the defence apparatuses are for oppressive actions against the majority of the people.
- How can states fail to collect obvious property taxes, just because of vested interest and attempt to rely on fees from the poor?

Conservatives committed to the privatization ideology will always argue that higher education budgets are in competition with other basic needs such as shelter, food, and

health. Yet this is a vicious circle. If the state wants to relieve itself of the burden to provide for food, shelter, and health, the sure way is to provide more post secondary education. It has been proved to be the best moderator for family size, prevention of diseases, provision of basic needs, including independence in putting up descent shelter. The route is not to perpetuate dependency of the people on the state, but rather to liberate them from the state. They have to be give the means, and higher education can do this.

Parental and Student Contributions. This is the most debated question and one which the World Bank is very adamant about. The issue really is not that parents and students should not contribute to their education, but rather how should all users and beneficiaries of higher education make a contribution to a common good, from which the state, the general public, individual families and the students themselves might benefit.

Psacharopoulos (1991), a great proponent of fees and loans, does not believe that so far higher education has had any impact in Africa in meeting manpower needs, the social demand for education, and the establishment of centres of excellence for research and training. In his words: 'As shown by experiences , the above batch of laudable objectives is seldom, if ever, achieved. Why?' (p.3). His answer is that because parents and students are not contributing to higher education, this has resulted in excessive demand, which in turn has lead to the deterioration of quality. His solution is to let users of higher education pay so that the forces of demand and supply will converge on an acceptable equilibrium. Obviously even capitalism has its own sorcerers! Everyone knows that the forces of supply and demand are pawns of big business, organized labour and other power brokers. He even thinks that universities will be managed more efficiently if people paid for the services. Yet we know private universities have had to be bailed out by the state in Japan (Clark, 1988). It is not a solution. But not to believe that higher education has made tremendous contributions to African social and economic development is to display the worst form of partisan ignorance.

Parents and students can pay for other reasons but not as a substitute for state contributions or as a mechanism to ameliorate supply and demand. Social policy cannot be left to the whims of the powers of supply and demand. Professor Paulston (1990), commenting on Psacharopoulos (1990) positions, decries his tendency to reduce all arguments to functionalist, positivist orthodoxy and to present 'straw-man conclusions'. Paulston paraphrases Hayek when he says this of Psacharopoulos: 'Nobody can be a great economist who is only an economist. An economist who is only an economist is likely to become a nuisance if not a positive danger' (p.399). It sounds vicious and punitive to raise fees in education in order to deter qualified and willing people from getting it. It reflects a lack of a philosophy of education and a sound social policy.

The recent emergence of a financial-intellectual complex dominated by a vocal, articulate, but an ultra conservative group of intellectuals gravitating towards the World Bank is a threat to an open and free discourse about alternative paths to the resolution of the crisis. The well respected Africanist scholar, Samoff (1991), captures this development very well when he says:

Research capacity, the potential to provide large-scale funding, and effective organizational muscle combine to enable the World Bank to globalize most of its preferred agenda. Its extensive investments in research on education, its practice of employing many of the world's (and perhaps most of the Third World's) senior educational researchers, and its unique access to studies conducted by other agencies, convert the misty mystique of expertise into an unassailable fortress of legitimacy. Within that fortress, the World Bank becomes the arbiter not only of contending loan applications and competing project proposals but also of the quality of research. The very specification of what is (and by exclusion, what is not) valid knowledge thus entrench a particular understanding of education and its roles and privileges, a particular set of priorities (p.5).

While America spends well over 20 percent of its annual budgets on tertiary and higher education (Colclough, 1990), the World Bank finds this figure objectionable in African countries (Psacharopoulos, 1990; Saint, 1990), so poor students have to pay fees or borrow funds from the state. This attitude is influencing other donor agencies to question African countries which spend a high proportion of their budgets on education, such as Kenya (AID, 1991). It is a complex world of conditionalities and dependency. For the World Bank, it is a clear case of conflict of interest as choices on where to invest its funds depends on how secure the sector is, and education as a social service cannot compete with the so called productive sectors. The sooner this financial-intellectual complex is disentangled the more open will debate on higher education be, as policies will be formulated free from the pressures of such a framework. Demand for higher education can be moderated better by changing admission standards and university capacities but not by humiliating people, telling them they cannot join the university because they cannot pay, or have to borrow money and be indebted for the rest of their lives in order to go to school. This is demeaning. It does not enhance education and it is not necessary except when neoconservative economists are marketing their ideology of privatization.

In more analytical contributions by Adrian (1983), Levy (1986), and Gertel (1991) with respect to tuition fees in Latin American universities, the practical aspects of tuition as an aspect of the privatization of higher education are articulated. While accepting that tuition fees could moderate demand for higher education, remove a perceived privilege to the rich class, allow for marginal expansion in enrolments, and possibly shift priorities in funding to lower levels of education, both Adrian (1983) and Levy (1986) point out that experience in Latin America has shown that only the state can provide quality education on equitable terms and that this obligation was fundamental to the survival of the state itself. In a sense, higher education could be seen as a basic obligation of the state, just like transport, communication, health, and water, which should remain as a basic and primary responsibility of any government, and be paid for through general taxation, as all are

essential for the health and social progress of nations. The external benefits of higher education to all nations, which cannot be appropriated by individuals themselves include:

- The regulated and controlled salaries in most countries, and in the public service in particular, are such that they do not represent the market values of people with higher education. Many employers in the private sector get very cheap labour due to low wages and hence the unaccounted for profits that big business makes.
- Social and cultural effects on the society, resulting from an active elite group may be phenomenal. While one cannot tag a dollar value to it, the articulation and improvement of social and cultural services depends very much on it.
- Improvements in economic productivity and technological innovations resulting from an expanded and active elite cannot be underestimated and such improvements benefit everybody. Likewise, education creates employment as most graduates end up employing low income people either as house servants or in other settings.
- Intergenerational effects of higher education include the class reproducing itself such that the state will invest less in educated families than before, and the taxation base expands as more people get higher education.
- Massive quality higher education sets national standards in every sphere of life, including the whole educational system.

Thus besides the progressive egalitarian ideology which supports a government sponsored general subsidy for higher education, and the fear that without public support private resources may distort the central purpose and mission of higher education, there are enumerable external benefits that the state reaps from heavy investments in human resources, and especially, higher education. Opposition to tuition fees also include the

feeling that tuition is mechanistic, individualistic, anti-education, authoritarian, and undemocratic. It singles out those families which have got bright children, who instead of being perceived as the pride of the nations, are seen as a burden, and thus punished for it. Tuition fees also tend to become an emotionally charged issue, and especially in party politics, thus subjecting education to partisan politics. Education is likely to suffer greatly if there is no consensus on the principle of giving accessible, affordable, and equitable quality education. Subjecting it to partisan politics and inter governmental transitional crises would be risking national prosperity and stability.

The issue is not that some people are against efficiency and equality but rather that the proposed modalities of achieving these goals are circumscribed and questionable. The charging of tuition fees has been well documented as having a negative impact to access, even when there are loans and grants, and is not equitable as this practice punishes a few for the benefit of the many. If the issue is equity, then progressive taxation, where all the rich people pay for the common good, would be the only sure way to equalize investments in higher education. Potential employers of cheap labour and consumers of generalized benefits will also pay for higher education. In fact, some of the suggested mechanisms for the equalization of access to higher education such as loans, repayable grants, and bursaries are inherently inequitable since children of the poor, apart from the psychological feelings that they are differentially indebted to the state, will have to save from their salaries after graduation to pay for the loans and scholarships, and hence suffer continued hardships.

Given the increasing graduate unemployment rates in the formal sector, the weaknesses of the state to administer loans, corrupt practices, and problems in the tracking of graduates for cost sharing and recovery, one is tempted to dismiss the tuition fees route of funding university education. Woodhall (1983) reviewed most exhaustively the administration of student loans and concluded that loans did not even become self-financing due to high default rates, high unemployment rates among graduates, the disappearance of

graduates into the informal sector, high administrative costs and political pressures against discrimination among tax payers. Indeed, history shows that in developing countries recovery of loans from graduates is very poor and often cannot justify the expenses of setting up the machinery for the administration of the scheme. In Argentina, Gertel (1991) reports that given hyper inflation rates, collection of fees had to be abandoned after three years as the value of loans had depreciated to negatives by the time they were collected. On the other hand, the loan scheme increased bureaucracies, corruption, and inequities. A recent review by the World Bank (Albrecht, 1991) concluded that student loan schemes have plunged some governments into greater expenditures than their initial investments, with Kenya loosing more than 103 percent of its investments, and Brazil and Chile loosing 71 and 100 percent respectively due to low interest rates, hidden subsidies, default, and administrative costs. In Kenya, where a loan scheme for food, accommodation, books, stationery, and pocket allowances has been operating since 1974, about 2 billion shillings have been loaned out but only 50 million collected by 1990 (Wandiga 1991 citing Auditor General's report of 1990). Thus loans schemes are problematic.

In African technological and cultural context, the situation is even more complex since the data for the assessment of who is eligible for loans and who is not is very poor. Therefore, the process of identifying those who should pay tuition fees for their children and those who should get free grants, and those who should get loans introduces much error and interpersonal friction that they may threaten the social and political tranquillity both at village and national levels. Faced with these problems, Zambia, which has introduced nominal fees of 25 percent, made access to loans free to everybody with children in institutions of higher learning. As a result, even rich people have been benefiting from cheap loans of about 2.5 percent interest, and this has introduced inequities among beneficiaries. It was the powerful persons who more easily got the loans, knowing that they will pay if tracked down, while the poor agonized on whether to take the loan or

not, as loans put the whole family in a debt trap. Thus in Zambia, the effects of the new fees structure have been already felt in three ways:

- Students from poor families have dropped out of the university altogether, as parents and relatives fail to raise their portion of fees and the university has no bail mechanisms in the form of grants and employment possibilities.
- Decisions to educate children at university level are getting skewed in favour of the male children and the 'good guys' in the family when choices have to be made at the margin, thus discriminating against females, the more independently minded or those a little bit rustic.
- Tracking lower class children to inferior institutions where fees are affordable. This perpetuates inequalities on class and residence lines as poor rural students decide to remain in cheaper institutions.

The same phenomenon of discrimination against the rural poor has been observed in Ghana after the introduction of World Bank inspired policies relating to accommodation, paying for meals, and relying on loans, (Morna, 1989).

Given that the rich class in Africa is minuscule, but can pay more through progressive and property taxes, one wonders how much governments should invest in student loan schemes which are open to abuse and net loss on investments.

The Kenya student leaders captured their predicament in the loan scheme very well quite recently. First, they pointed out that almost all students have either a poor family background, or at least a poor relative in the family, and this has been demonstrated by Hughes (1987). Then they put their case this way:

Comrades, this loan system is a ploy by the government to keep the sons and daughters of peasants poor all through. This is an antipeople plot which must be resisted. They want to forget that we have fees to pay for our sisters and brothers; fathers and mothers to look after; dowry to pay because some of us must marry; rents to pay after graduation. No comrades, we must resist this move to give us loans. The government owes us free education.

(Mutahi, 1986, p.12).

This may be an exaggeration based on a tradition of free education but serious academics like Benjamin (1990), as President of University Teachers in Canada, would also argue that students contribute to their education in kind by dedicating that long period of time to education for the common good. In fact, if one was to compute the opportunity costs of some of these students, some indeed may have lost. The same arguments would be raised against the use of graduate pay roll taxes proposed by Colclough (1990), which he suggests are more equitable than user fees mitigated by student loans and scholarships. The burden of the graduate tax will fall more harshly on the poor segment of the society, both in financial and psychological terms while use of general taxation (progressive income tax and property tax) for a generalized subsidy distributes the burden equitably to those who can pay and those who will benefit from higher education. Equity in the incidence of taxation has to be balanced with equity in the pleasures of benefits. It is not self evident why this is not the route to university funding except for neoconservatism and pathologies of vested interests. Obviously, liberal and progressive educators would be wary of an education policy that results in two tier system of semi privatized, whereby the quality of the education of students depend on the fatness of the parents pockets. This will necessarily stratify and track children right from school doors.

Cost Sharing Proposals

African governments at independence were lured by the progressive and egalitarian ideology of the 1960s and 1970s. The independence euphoria resulted in populist stances,

an urge for patronage, and a zeal to make quick impacts in contrast with the long period of colonial stagnation, especially in education. As a result these governments took over too many of the functions of the family especially in education. One still nostalgically remembers being given many types of allowances such as clothing, transport, pocket, and enroute food allowance when joining universities in the middle sixties. Given the fact that the majority of the students had peasantry backgrounds, they could not afford descent clothing befitting the university culture, so some of these allowances were justified. Furthermore, during those times both families and students needed incentive systems to participate in higher education as there were many other alternatives for self-advancement and the value of higher education was not as highly appreciated as it is now. Today things have changed dramatically such that some of the allowances and incentives may not be totally justified or needed. There can be a slow but systematic shift of responsibilities for some expenses from the state to individual students and their families as data is collected on their ability to pay. In the meanwhile, grants and fellowships have to be available to cover these items for the really poor students. Figure 1 gives a schematic illustration of what should possibly be paid by who in higher education. It will be seen that the proposition is to allocate more responsibility for the welfare of students to themselves and their families. It is in these areas where people can be trained to be responsible for themselves and their future, to appreciate education, invest in it, and sacrifice for it. It should be pointed out though that in most universities, student welfare constitutes almost half of the annual student expenses. For instance, at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, the residential fees inclusive of room and meals, were TSh219,000 (approximately 1000 US dollars per year) and in Zimbabwe, the meal expenses were Z\$3000 or about \$1500 per year, and in Nairobi, one has to think of about \$350 for residence only and close to \$950 per year for meals. For countries in which the per capita incomes range between \$200 and \$400, this still represents an enormous proportion of any disposable income. Many families will have to work extremely hard and borrow from various sources to support their children in universities. The actual university fees as given earlier (Table 4) are rather

high. It is quite obvious that in African countries very few people can pay these fees and it is absurd to compare university fees with secondary school fees as in Gallabawa (1991). One is talking of a ratio of 1:38 (Hinchliffe, 1985; Jambo, 1988; but incomes are known to be more steeply skewed at the top in developing countries. While in industrial capitalist countries the middle and upper class may constitute more than 25 percent of the population, in the developing countries of Africa they constitute only about 2 percent. Quantitatively, in income terms, they are of different magnitudes altogether, and qualitatively, in terms of values and life styles, worlds apart. It is thus naive and pretentious to assume that there are many African families which can pay university fees. We know these parents. We see them in the villages everyday. Even the notion of getting a loan can be problematic due to illiteracy and cultural views on being heavily indebted. Therefore there will be a need for re-education and simplification of procedures for obtaining loans.

In the apportionment of responsibilities it will be extremely important to take into account students' needs in the area of social and personality development. University education is not to be judged by academic success only but the development of the whole person. Therefore, recreation and travel across geographical and political boundaries will have to be catered for. Currently African students are suffering from extreme forms of isolationism physically, psychologically, intellectually and technologically while evidence by Michalos (1991) suggests that the one single variable accounting for student happiness is the opportunity and possibility of comparing themselves with other similar groups.

ITEMS		FUNDERS			
		Governments	Donor and Private groups	Foundations	Parents and Students
A Capital Development		//	/	/	--
B Operating Budgets		//	--	--	--
C Special Units		/	/	/	--
D Laboratory Facilities		//	/	--	--
E Research by:	a Students	//	/	/	--
	b Faculty	//	/	/	--
F Staff Development		//	/	/	--
G Student Expenses:	Tuition fees*	//	/	/	--
	Transportation	--	--	--	//
	Recreation	//	--	--	--
	Books	/	--	--	/
	Food	/	--	--	//
	Housing	--	--	--	//
	Pocket Allowance	--	--	--	//
	Clothing and Upkeep	/	--	--	//
	Stationeries	//	--	--	/

Figure 1: Funding Mechanisms in Higher Education

KEY

// The Primary source of funding

/ Possible source for partial funding

-- Does not need to be involved

* All inclusive of tuition, registration, examinations, unions, health, and insurance fees.

The whole issue of student unrest is dealt with in greater detail elsewhere (See Omari and Mihyo, 1991) and all evidence suggests that students are angry and disenchanted with university education and the current social order. Investments in restoring the credibility and power of higher education will be worthwhile indeed, and retrenchment is obviously not the route. Violent student protests, including deaths by the bullet, against state withdrawal from higher education have already occurred in Kenya leading to closure of all the universities for over six months, suggesting that any retrenchment has to be slow and educative rather than abrupt and unilateral (Kigotho, 1991).

Students Financial Aid

Universities cannot abandon students and say all financial and welfare matters are the responsibility of the state, their parents, or themselves. Academic life and student welfare are inseparable, especially in universities requiring full-time attendance, and geographically detached from urban life where some students could fend for themselves through part-time jobs and parental care. The lives of students outside the classroom cannot be shrugged off just like that, and some of the universities currently contemplating on walking out of students lives are courting a far more serious student crisis than that which exists at present. Indeed, it is not pleasant for professors to teach hungry, haggard fellows in tattered clothing, wearing bathroom sandals, some made out of old car tyres.

Universities have to have an active role in negotiations for appropriate levels of student funding, subsidized services such as residence facilities, catering, and transportation. The University also has to administer, on the campus, an active financial aid programme consisting of:

- Special government (local and national/federal) loans and grants for the needy students while on the campus. The loans are repayable before

graduation through part-time jobs but the grants could be given for merit on a competitive basis, to poor students.

- Scholarship funds and bursaries for able but needy students.
- Emergency short time loans for students who can repay after doing vacation jobs or who will market their time in lieu of money.
- Part time and vacation employment on the campus, work-study programmes, and arrangements for job opportunities in industry and government.
- Departmental jobs such as teaching and research assistantship for both money and professional development.
- Trust and endowed funds for specific projects but whose accumulated interests may be recycled into students financial assistance programmes.
- Campaigns and activities to raise funds and obtain donations from groups such as cooperatives, trade unions, employers associations for students' financial support.

In this kind of arrangement, transfer of some expenses from the state to the immediate beneficiaries of higher education can be gradually and progressively introduced by the university. This may require countrywide campaigns in communities and organized groups, and especially among the alumni, with an explicit message that the focus is not to substitute for government funding but rather to:

- Build a student financial support system as many students will not manage to pay for room, board, and other the expenses in Table 4.
- To create special and enhanced teaching and learning environments such as special library collections, research projects, computer services, and facilities for the disabled.

- To give the university some flexibility in the management of its affairs, given the unpredictable inflations which lead to marginal fluctuations in the operation/ recurrent budgets.

The transfer of any welfare responsibility to parents has to be monitored carefully such that:

- It doesn't result in the state cutting back on its contributions and responsibility for affordable, equitable, and quality higher education.
- The debt burden is not too harsh on the poor during and after graduation.
- No subsidy is given to the rich people through cheap student loans.
- Doesn't force students to lead too frugal or austere life styles as savings might go to fees and basic up keep, while a small group of students lead ostentatious lives. The university also has to curtail conspicuous consumerism by auspicious groups from rich economic backgrounds as university culture should emphasize campus unity rather than disintegrative cliques. For instance, at the University of Dar-es-Salaam, Kamara (1990) reports the existence of such clandestine student groups as the 'Hill Siders' and the 'Hill Sinners' which were based on class disparities and disciplines of study. These have caused all kinds of campus frictions such as engineering designs for exclusive social events, cafeterias and high tables. Their behaviour is quite antithetical to campus fraternities and sororities which traditionally emphasised egalitarianism .
- Parental support for higher education is not discriminatory by gender and ability such that either females or less able or disobedient children are denied support altogether or are tracked to less prestigious institutions where fees and life styles are manageable.

- Children are not unnecessarily denied their freedom and independence through the parental and state financial bondage while university education is supposed to be liberating.
- The fees and responsibilities are perceived to be reasonable, fair, equitable, have been publicly debated, and are predictable in amount and timing of incidence.
- Does not lead to high drop-out rates among poor children on account of their inability to pay and maintain a decent life as equality of opportunity has to be central to the mission of universities.
- Families with many children, wives, and sick relatives are not equally treated such that they have to cut back on family support which may result in malnutrition and fail to give support for other children in primary and secondary schools. Likewise the university funding system should not discriminate against students living in remote areas who might not get information about what to do on finances, find transport costs prohibitive, and the communication system discouragingly inefficient. As Biraimah (1987) has shown, rural students, and especially females, are the most vulnerable to such new initiatives.
- There are systematic and regular reviews of student life styles, needs, adequacy of current provisions, impact of the new policies, and debates on their desirability and feasibility.
- The university has a system of collecting basic data on its students such as parental education, employment and siblings that students' loans and grants are given on the basis of need, including preference being given to single parents, divorced parents, orphans, non sponsored students, people working on part-time to educate themselves, students with large families, and the disabled students like those with visual, hearing and physical impairments.

- There is active stimulation to evolve flexible capital markets for loans to students and to develop appropriate but private housing schemes near the campus.

In this context, no assumption is made to the effect that any fees or transfer of responsibility will be a lasting solution to the deepening crisis in higher education. In fact, these measures are only a stopgap and can easily end up as an escapist route. The state and the university administration have to deal with the real problems of adequate university funding and efficient, quality management in higher education. In addition, introduction of any fees or transfer of welfare responsibilities to students and their parents will require:

- Substantial improvement of the quality of higher education as users will have the right to demand quality education of a diverse nature so that they have more choices than hitherto provided.
- Flexibility in programming of courses such that students can work part-time or reschedule and delay their studies by terms or years. Likewise, students who can finish earlier by taking heavier loads during the academic year should be allowed to do so. Currently people take equal loads in many African universities as students are undifferentiated in abilities stamina and speed.
- Decentralization of higher education such that students can go to nearby campuses and colleges, thus cutting down on transport, residential, and upkeep costs, and some may be able to do their studies partly by correspondence.
- A slow process of re-education and weaning both students and parents from a long tradition of dependency on the state. Otherwise abrupt discontinuation of state support to higher education, given the volatile nature of politics of higher education may result in student crises and

violence leading to university closures as happened already in Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda.

Income Generating Activities

One proposition regarding university funding during times of financial crisis is for students to engage in income generating activities. However, universities have got specific mission statements and mandates which should not be trampled on or perverted by a crisis of the state or paralysis in management. There are legitimate areas where universities should make money and areas in which it would be a perversion of its basic mission. Indeed some areas of activities may lead to distortion and compromise of the university mission which gravitates on the perfection of scholarship. Basic to this analysis is the fundamental belief that education as a social enterprise is a state matter which should be greatly subsidized and universities cannot turn subsidized facilities and services into inaccessible money making operations. For instance, universities should make modest money from:

Share Capital and Endowments. Some of the established universities invest in long term capital markets and some have endowments in the form of shares and fixed property. They can thus make money from these sources to augment their regular budgets but not all universities have access to this source of funding, especially in developing countries.

Patents. These would be a result of scientific discoveries, technologies, designed modules and prototypes which can be marketed. Yet this might not bring in much and can't be for large profits.

Bookstores. When well managed, they might be self-financing operations as books, other than subsidized textbooks for students, can be sold for marginal profits. However, books as a matter of policy, need to be affordable so as to

encourage leisure reading, building of a personal libraries, and attract the general public to interact with the university through the bookshops and libraries.

Food services. The catering services on the campus can be self-supporting but may not make much profit as the food has to be affordable. Competitive eating outlets of a diverse nature can be conveniently located to attract students and staff.

University farms. Many universities do establish experimental farms from which they can sell improved seed varieties, services, and some of the products. Yet these are not commercial operations but scientific services and any windfall in profit is incidental.

Parking services. Many universities institute parking services to regulate parking facilities. These would be heavily subsidized for staff and students but such services need not be free for everybody. The money might not be much but can be used for the maintenance of parking areas and adjacent grounds.

Health services. Universities may have their own clinics and laboratories associated with their teaching hospitals where they may charge nominal fees for services, just like any other public hospital in the country.

Sports and athletic facilities. Universities often have modern sporting and athletic facilities which can be partly leased to professional clubs, individuals and families.

The press and university publications. Money can be made through a well run university press, and its facilities can be leased. Newspapers, brochures, calendars, and some journals may bring in money. Some universities can have

their own media services, including photographic and reprographic units, and radio/television stations.

Professional service groups. They include accountants, lawyers, psychologists, statisticians, engineers, doctors, and educators. These can organize themselves and market their services for general funds to supplement their departmental budgets, but still be centrally audited.

Student housing and conference facilities. These should be self-supporting units, through residential fees and hire services.

Hotels. Some universities have their own self-financing hotels, primarily for staff, guests, and parents.

Social encounters. Some universities organize anniversary dances, prize galas, speech days, exhibitions, shows, and performances which generate funds.

Yet all accounts show that even in well managed institutions these sources of income do not exceed five percent of the university operating budgets. Thus, it may not be of much worth to divert the expensive energies and time of university personnel, and especially, the academic staff, from their primary responsibility of teaching and research to commercial endeavours. It is also self-evident that universities are inherently ill equipped, and lack experience in business management such that the enterprises either degenerate and collapse or introduce elements of inefficiency, corruption, and waste (Saint, 1990). Researchers at the University of Dar-es-Salaam (Jambo, 1988; Hirji, 1990), where the university had a beach hotel, cooperative shops, a garage, a press, a bookshop, and a technology centre, report that these have not proved viable due to managerial inefficiency, and another report presents findings of gross mismanagement, negligence, and laxity resulting in the collapse

of these enterprises. The recent review of these activities in universities by the Association of African Universities (AAU, 1990) gave a similarly abysmal picture, concluding that some of these activities have turned from being fund raising to 'friends raising'.

Indeed it was demeaning, a wastage of resources, and a perversion when the University of Dar-es-Salaam professors tried to own and manage a cooperative shop and sell goods in university supermarkets in 1978-80. First it was a disaster as the shops collapsed, but more seriously the public could not understand how university professors could behave like that. It was too much of a compromise of ethos. Deprofessionalizing ventures tainted the image of the university. It is not that universities and staff should not make money from legitimate professional activities, as everybody does, but it is more serious for the university image, credibility, and public confidence if it extends itself too much such that people start asking the question: 'Is there anything that the university won't do for money?' It seems that the university should do nothing to suggest moral decay, abandonment of its mission, derailment of values or slippage of standards consummate with its role as an institution of higher learning.

Likewise universities cannot make their services too expensive for the community, just because it has to make money. These services need to be easily accessible and affordable. It is one thing for the university staff to do all kinds of consultancies in order to both enrich their experiences and earn some income but it is quite another thing for a university to be converted into an education bazaar. The university has always to retain that credibility and fascination as a service institution where even when things are really difficult, the community can reach out for inspiration, a breath of fresh air, and improve individual and communal skills for the common good. It is expected to be a place where modesty is a virtue. It cannot afford to overprice itself. If it does, it will be further isolated, given that only few benefits derive directly from it, and will be attached by a

variety of interested parties. The greatest defence of a university is its openness, accessibility, and service to the society .

Remunerations, Brain Drain, and Deprofessionalization Of Academia

In taking a stance against the commercialization of university services one does not need to be oblivious to the meagre and ever depreciating salaries of university staff. Table 5 shows how bad the situation is in some of the universities in the region. Characteristically the formal salaries range from a professorial monthly maximum salary of 119 dollars at the University of Dar-es-Salaam; 489 dollars in Zambia; 667 dollars in Ethiopia; to 1480 dollars in Zimbabwe; and 2090 dollars in the South African Bantustans.

Besides the salary differentials, there are great variations in contractual arrangements and in the fringe benefits such as subsidized housing, allowances for transport, child education, inducement, responsibility, and furniture. In some universities such as Nairobi, Dar-es-Salaam, and Zambia, staff members can also import cars duty free after every four years. Yet even when all is said and done, in some of these countries the monthly salaries can hardly sustain a family of five for two weeks. Indeed given the low salaries, these governments will have to increasingly rely on political and moral incentives in addition to these allowances. Unfortunately, some governments are discovering these mechanisms too late so it is doubtful if they can reverse the acute brain drain in countries such as Uganda,

Table 5: University Monthly Salaries in Selected African and Canadian Universities in local currency and Dollars** (1989/90 Figures)

Institution	Graduate Teaching Assistant	Assistant Lecturer	Lecturer	Assistant Professor/ Senior Lecturer ¹	Associate Professor	Professor
University of Addis Ababa	600-630 222-241	630-713 241-263	700-830 278-313	800-1200 296-444	1100-1300 407-535	1800(Birr) 667
University of Dar-es-Salaam	6430-9300 33-48	9025-11900 47-61	11273-14367 38-73	13200-18923 68-96	18925-20425 98-103	21175- 23030(TSh) 109-119
University of Nairobi	""	37-7730 230-357	6730-10300 293-448	9000-12700 391-532	11630-15130 307-639	13900- 17400(KSh) 604-737
University of Zimbabwe	""	NA	200-2728 820- 1091	2804-3035 1150-1244	3190-3360 1306-1378	3399-3609(Z\$) 13-1480
University of Zambia	060420- 073468 168-193	063812- 100300 229-268	104700-121300 279-324	116392-144768 311-386	138043-157393 368-420	167964-183232 (ZK) 448-489
University of Lesotho	1489-1633 396-661	1743-1901 697-760	2033-2519 814-1008	2390-2881 1036-1132	2937-3209 1185-1284	3334-3392(R) 1334-1437
University of Botswana	""	NA	2310-2882 247-1336	2676-3340 1443-1804	3340-3467 1804-1872	467-3868(P) 1872-2089
University of Swaziland	1436-1782 396-661	NA	2021-2947 814-1008	3076-3433 1030-1132	3323-3804- 1183-1284	3804-3990(R) 1334-1437
Buthebuthe University: Bop/Tswana	""	NA	2196-3831 878-1340	2893-4180 1157-1672	3688-4312 1473-1803	4014-3224(R) 1606-2090
Canada: University of British Columbia**	""	NA	2350-4244 ¹ 2161-3397	3430-4833 2907-4096	4487-5771 3803-4891	5449-7123(C\$) 4618-6036

See Table 4 for exchange rates

++ The Salary bands cover 80% of the people in that category as there are no scale limits.

* Addis Ababa does not have this category. It is called Assistant Professor with three steps. The same holds true of the University of British Columbia.

"" Graduate Assistants are not regarded as staff.

+ There are variations in supplementation for example, for medical and rare professions, and fringe benefits, not included in these basic scales.

University of Zambia has three grades for lecturership. The Kwacha sums are annual salaries.

1. Just called mark 'below preceding'.

NA Not an applicable category.

Tanzania, Zambia, Mozambique, Ethiopia, and to the idea that economic wages can be affordable (Mwinyi, cited by Sheriff, 1990; Uganda, 1989), and hence the rallying theme of Makerere University staff is: 'Academic Freedom and Freedom from Hunger'.

Obviously many of these governments will not be able to compete in the market pricing of academics. Coombe (1991) cautions of the impact a free South Africa will have on the mobility of human resources in Eastern and Southern Africa. Without political

moderation and competitive wages one should anticipate a worsening crisis in higher education in some of these countries. Any unsustainable external intervention such as direct subsidies on salaries and allowances as suggested by the Germans (Wohlgemuth, 1990) will just distort this painful adjustment process. It is now quite self evident that the brain drain has as much to do with market forces for cultural and human capital as the political and social milieu in which academics operate. Any search for lasting solutions to the brain drain problem will have to address both the adequacy of financial remunerations and the political climate in these countries. Donor countries and agencies may have to address the issues of reverse brain drain in this context at both levels of consideration.

Discussions in all the universities of the region tend to suggest that the brain drain some of these countries is not just a matter of economics and survival motives. It is a complex phenomenon, encompassing a lack of:

- political stability and participation;
- academic freedom, university autonomy, civil liberties;
- respect for the intelligentsia and equity in the treatment of expatriates and locals, especially in inducement allowances and access to foreign currency;
- descent management of the universities;
- academic cultures in faculties and departments, and a lack of critical and independent thought in an increasingly competitive environment.

Independent evidence from Norway (Manger and Eikeland, 1990) using a large sample of academics, suggested that the one most significant variable predicting departure of academic staff was collegial relations, and this is the area where many African institutions are weakest. In fact, most of the people who leave the institutions are not those who are in financial and academic distress but rather some of the best academics who are

finding jobs easily in outside universities, international organizations, and in the civil service. It is the systematic tackling of this malaise in some of these countries that might abate the brain drain but an opening up of the job market in South Africa will prove a real challenge.

Within donor circles, there is almost an awe of the fact that academics are getting engaged in all kinds of consultancies and non-professional activities in order to make ends meet, given their level of salary and allowances. The question though is not that academics are doing these things but rather the kinds of activities they get involved in, and what impact such activities have on their research and teaching. There are professional activities such as consultancies which should be undertaken by university academics and there are deprofessionalizing activities such as driving taxis, personal and direct involvement in dairy and chicken farming, conducting tuition classes in primary schools, and selling in grocery stores and bars. Engagement in some of these activities cannot be wholly attributed to penury, although it often may reflect penurious dispositions. Many professors and top government and parastatal executives in countries such as Kenya, Uganda, Zambia and Tanzania who are engaged in backyard banana farming or poultry and cattle rearing, are not doing these things out of desperation. Most could not be classified as poor. They are the most enterprising fellows and carry out these enterprises with much alacrity. Many are doing it for fun. Others are making money and have hidden motives such as camouflaging their sources of wealth. For some there seem to be some cultural elements associated with peasantry and nomadic life styles, and they therefore derive pleasure in engaging in these undertakings. Just as in the Masai culture, even in the middle of plenty and modernity, one is never happy without some cattle around (Kituyi, 1990). Some of these activities can be undertaken professionally to minimize any injurious effect on academic excellence. Some academics can keep a cow, both as a pet and a source of milk, just like western professors keep dogs, horses, and cats as pets. It is rather when and how some things are done and not that they are done at all. Some professors and senior

executives are personally overdoing some of these activities so that, not only their academic work suffers but also the image of the university. Imagine the damage that is done when professors drive taxis at the time they should be teaching and doing research. Instead of turning these activities over to professional groups to manage for them, they do it themselves even when there is unemployment of drivers and farm workers. In the final analysis, it is a sense of discretion that counts.

Efficiency, Effectiveness and Equity

While matters of efficiency, cost effectiveness, and equity are important guiding principles for the allocation of scarce resources, it is becoming increasingly clear that, education as the most empowering social process, takes place in a given political and social context which conditions all decisions. Concepts such as efficiency and equity are both ideological and technocratic, and are loaded with meanings, but without universal definitions and agreements on them. Academics and policy makers therefore differ greatly on their significance and application. For instance, Professor Don Adams (1990) battling the positivist rationality of Professor Psacharopoulos (1990), convincingly problematizes the concept of efficiency by asking the questions:

If individuals value inputs and outputs differently, can efficiency be treated by a single index around which policies and plans may be directed and judged? Or is it possible that even efficiency inevitably becomes political because under every policy some groups are perceived as winners and others as losers? (p.385).

The point is that all policy decisions should be evaluated on their specific social and political consequences. Policy makers, in some circumstances, may support inequities and perpetuate inefficiencies to protect a given power structure and ensure political stability. Long ago I used to protest against the use of gender and geographical quota systems in admissions to secondary schools and universities. It was a policy aimed at eliminating

historical gender and ethnic inequality in many African countries. Now it seems that free competitions, which may have ensured efficiency in completion rates in secondary schools and universities, would have resulted in whole tribes not sending anybody to the national university while university education is increasingly becoming the surest and fastest path into national politics, high and reliable incomes, and may thus lead to a more equitable distribution of national resources by geographical locations. The outspoken editor cum publisher in Kenya, Hilary N'gweni (1990) clearly shows how historically inbuilt ethnic and racial inequalities in Kenya necessitated corrective policy directions, including the use of a quota system and spread in investment patterns, which may have been less cost effective and hence inefficient but politically desirable and socially defensible.

In higher education, in particular, where university education is a basic requirement for a future high paying job and effective participation in national politics, where distribution of national resources is debated, equality in access by ethnicity will take precedence over issues of efficiency and cost effectiveness. But equity is a more encompassing issue than just ethnic balance. It also includes equity by gender, class, disability, religion, geographic location, and minority group. Unfortunately the nature of African politics seem to gravitate around ethnicity rather than these other equally important parameters of equity. Even ethnicity becomes an issue only among the influential group as the marginalized groups have remained outside debates on equity and national distribution of resources.

The current juxtaposition of efficiency and equity in policy debates by neoconservatives sometimes seem like a claptrap. One has reasons to wonder if all organizations are serious about equity in all these parameters, or whether their primary motive is technocratic efficiency. For some of them, the juxtaposition is more than often only for intellectual cosmetic purposes, designed to give the debate a semblance of credibility and a progressive posture.

Efficiency refers to better management practices, better planning strategies and processes, better utilization of current resources and facilities, all of which may contribute to cost effectiveness, which deals with producing the same product at minimum costs. For instance, admitting students with a lower grade averaged because gender or ethnic groups have to fill their quota may result in higher repetition and attrition rates, which may suggest inefficiency in the use of resources, and higher costs in producing a graduate, but this is justified on equity criteria. However, inefficiency such as 30 to 50 percent wastage of food in many of these universities (Musangi, 1980), duplication of programmes with very few students (AAU 1990) official corruption (Omari and Mihyo 1991; Kauzeni, 1990), keeping a large and underemployed administrative staff (AAU,1990), perpetuating a flawed and antagonistic counter productive relationship between universities and their parental ministries (Coombe, 1991), lack of concern for cost effectiveness and efficiency (Hinchliffe, 1987 and World Bank, 1990), lack of a dependable and predictable funding strategy (Goma, 1989) all need to be aggressively and urgently tackled.

The special status of universities, entailing autonomy and academic freedom does not immunize them from obligations to deliver and behave responsibly. Even if there were no crisis and plentiful resources came the universities' way, it will not be enough just to sit and enjoy them for one has to ask why they came at all. Universities have to awaken to the realities of a world of competition for resources and patronage, where the better they can demonstrate in words and deeds, that they care for efficiency in, and can show tangible social benefits derived from their existence, the more they are likely to win public confidence and hence better funding possibilities. The rampant complacency on these issues reported by AAU (1990) does not auger well with public expectations of them.

On the other hand, comparing African universities with those in developed countries strictly on the same parameters without contextual caveats can be quite dangerous and disturbing. For instance, Hinchliffe (1987); Maliyamkono (1987); and Gallabawa

(1991) point out some useful steps that can improve efficiency and cost effectiveness but when discussing the issue of low staff-student ratios and the high proportion of university operating budgets going to a large administrative staff, they are oblivious of both the qualitative differences in individual staff composition, technological variations in delivery of instruction, and the existence of computerized operations in these universities of the North which have lead to the cutting down of administrative staff. While low staff-student ratios of 1:3.76 as that obtaining at the University of Dar-es-Salaam (Table 6) is absurd and callous, as it is just a drain of scarce resources, there are no magical, universally agreed on staff-student ratios. For instance, within Canada, the ratio will vary from a 1:21 at McMaster University to 1:13 at the University of British Columbia. The ratios are often given without informing readers as to whether one was using head counts, fulltime equivalents, or establishment figures, all of which may lead to variations in the actual figure and in the interpretation of the ratio.

Likewise, the composition of teaching staff matters greatly. In comparing and contrasting situations where on one hand the modal distribution of staff by status is at professional level, and almost all with a doctoral degree, as it is in North America, and situations where the modal distributional point is lectureship, with many staff without a doctoral degree and less than five years of experience, as it is in many African universities, the rhetoric about efficiency in staff-student ratios does not make any sense at all (Table 6 and 7). In addition, a university has to articulate a philosophy of instruction. Those which are committed to a more intensive approach to teaching as a matter of policy, may justify a low staff-student ratio. It will require small classes for seminars, tutorials, laboratory work, apart from plenary lectures to large classes. Likewise, where you have a young faculty, with an inexperienced young leadership, one may need more support staff to get just the basic things going. Thus saying developing countries spend comparatively higher proportions of their university resources on administration or that they have a low staff-student ratio without reference to the objective conditions obtaining in a given

institution is both calumny and intellectually irresponsible. In many North American institutions, use of graduate students as teaching assistants (to mark papers and conduct tutorials) is quite common and yet they are not included in the computation of staff-student ratios while in developing countries graduate students are hardly used. In the same vein, the proportion of undergraduate to graduate students would matter a lot for graduate students may need less intensive contacts than the undergraduates. For instance, the ratio between graduates and undergraduates at the University of British Columbia is 3.22:1 (UBC, 1989) while in most developing countries the proportion of undergraduates to a graduate student is much higher (Table 6). The issue is not that cross comparisons should not be made using ratios but that comparisons should be made under an agreed set of definitions and parameters, and ratios interpreted only in given specific policy and operational contexts.

In discussing staff-student ratios, therefore, the variables that determine staff strength in a given institution need to be taken into account. Table 7 gives the distribution of staff rank and Table 8 gives the strength of the teaching staff in five universities. While qualifications and seniority are not sufficient to ensure quality teaching, there is overwhelming evidence that the level of education and experience of teachers are positively and significantly related to schooling outcomes, otherwise universities would not be looking and paying heavily for these qualities. Characteristically, the teaching staff in developing countries is young (below 45) the majority of them are below the doctoral level of training. In addition, most universities are running below their full compliment of the established positions by as much as 20 percent. This contrasts sharply with universities in developed countries where close to 80 percent of the teaching staff are doctoral holders, over 70 percent being in the professorial ranks. The shortage of staff in these universities in developing countries is particularly acute at the professorial levels which may in part explain the practice of having lecturers as Chairmen of departments (Table 8). A

government appointed advisory committee at the University of Zimbabwe noted in this respect that:

The University is running at some disturbing vacancy rates in some Departments and Faculties. For example, of 68 established professional posts at the University, only 32 are currently filled and 36 are vacant ... a vacancy rate of 53 percent at that critical level of university staffing deprives the only institution of higher learning an essential academic leadership of experienced staff. This state of affairs was unsatisfactory.

(Mkushi, 1989, p.19).

Table 6: Some Indices and Ratios of Selected Parameters in Five Universities in the Eastern and Central African Region (1989)*

Institution	Undergraduate Vs Graduate	Local Vs Expatriate Staff	Staff-Student Ratios	Academic Vs Non Academic Staff
Addis Ababa University	9429:431 21.88:1	547:131 4.18:1	9860:678 14.54:1	N/A
University of Dar-es-Salaam	2705:420 6.44:1	765:67 11.42:1	3125:832 3.76:1	832:1929 1:2.32
University of Nairobi	9072:1284 7.07:1	965:102 9.46:1	10356:891 11.62:1	891:2820 1:3.16
University of Zimbabwe	7699:1309 ⁺ 5.88:1	487:228 2.14:1	10580:715 14.80:1	N/A
Makerere University	4772:532 8.97:1	460:24 19.17:1	5304:484 10.96:1	N/A

* 1988 figures. The rest for Zimbabwe are 1990 figures.

+ Absolute numbers given first.

++ There were no indication if they were using full time equivalents or head counts. Universities with large part-time students (Nairobi and Zimbabwe) may have inflated figures.

Sources of Data: The Dean of Graduate Studies in each University

Table 7: Distribution of Academic Staff by Ranks and Employment Status, 1989/90.

Institution	Academic Ranks [*]					Number and Status	
	Assistant Lecturer/TA	Lecturer	Assistant Professor/ Senior Lecturer	Associate Professor	Professor	Total	Expenditure
University of Dar-es-Salaam	211(32)	211(32)	139(21)	62(10)	31(5)	654	33(8)
Addis Ababa University	130(20)	233(35)	175(27)	94(14)	28(4)	660	30(8)
Malawi University	153(25)	231(38)	132(22)	30(8)	41(7)	607	24(4)
University of Nairobi	62(0.06)	608(39)	229(22)	82(8)	46(5)	1026	102(10)
University of Zimbabwe	75(11)	436(64)	109(15)	29(4)	40(6)	709	228(32)
University of Zambia	95(20)	243(52)	63(14)	33(7)	33(7)	467	185(40)
University of British Columbia	NA	115(6) ^{**}	416(23)	351(30)	729(40)	1811	NA

* The Percentages are given

** Given as Rank below Assistant Professor

Source: Registrar's Office, except for Zambia which was obtained in UNESCO (1988)

Some of the universities are entering a vicious circle of mediocrity. As institutional leadership at departmental and faculty levels gets into the hands of younger people (professionally and by age), senior and serious academics (professors) shy away from those places as they do not want to spend their energies in talking matches and kangaroo courts. In the same vein, experienced academic administrators are finding universities unattractive. As a result, universities are experiencing difficulties in recruiting and retaining them. Mkushi (1989) laments the loss at the University of Zimbabwe of the registrar, bursar, directors of personnel, works, and the deputies in the registrars office and in the library, and within one year. Likewise, the University of Dar-es-Salaam has failed to fill the position of bursar for the last 15 years. It seems, therefore, that discussion of efficiency issues which does not take into account these internal managerial dynamics, as currently formulated by AUU (1990), is not likely to tackle the real issues eroding the quality of higher education.

Table 8: Comparative Strength of the Teaching Force in Selected Universities

Institution*	Staffing Characteristics in Percentages						Staffing complement
	AGE			TRAINING			
	35 or less	35-45	Above 45	BA/BSc	MA/MSc	PhD	
[1] Addis Ababa University	32	49	19	19	36	45	77
[2] University of Dar-es-Salaam	36	30	14	12	41	47	91
[3] University of Nairobi	24	51	25	5	51	44	79
[4] University of Zimbabwe	22	43	35	20	39	41	84
[5] Makerere University	35	40	25	14	65	21	73
[6] University of British Columbia*	7	30	63	5	16	79	100

Source: * Deans of Graduate Offices in these universities

+ University of British Columbia: Fact Book, Sixth Edition, November, 1989. Budget, Planning, and Systems Management Office, 1989.

Conclusions and Future Scenarios

Nothing from any of the countries in the region should suggest that inefficiency can be allowed to coexist with excellence in higher education. In fact, educators should realize that, besides the current crisis associated with an economic recession (Heyneman, 1990), the generous days of peak appropriations and commitments to higher education are gone. They have to go beyond the mere rational allocation and management of resources to meet national and institutional demands. While there is a necessity to delineate crisis management policies and strategies, the need for well reasoned out, rational, and coherent policy responses and strategies for both short term crisis management and long term institutional sustainability is paramount. Some of the piecemeal approaches dictated by the hegemony of capital might only exacerbate the crisis, both at state and at institutional levels.

Internal Evaluations

Institutions have to ask themselves harder questions regarding priorities, such as which programmes need to be closed, which ones need to be frozen for a while, and which ones need major and minor surgery. As Mauers (1976) points out, there will be need for coherent policies, shrewd financial planning, and careful management. While change may not be always desirable and endorsed, hard decisions and choices need to be taken. Some of the duplications and non-viable programmes in various universities reported by AAU (1990) need to be merged or abandoned. This will neither be new nor easy. Many universities elsewhere in Europe are awakening to these fiscal realities too so are closing whole departments, reducing budgets for some, reducing enrolment quotas for some, and undertaking reorganization of programmes so as to achieve cost effectiveness and efficiency (UBC Reports, 21 February, 1991, vol.37 no.4). Some countries as far apart as Holland, Australia, and Nigeria have embarked on a massive overhaul of their higher education systems in a more systematic manner (Shittu, 1990; Goedegebunne and Meek, 1991). The trend points towards shifting from a system of small single purpose institutions to what Clark (1983) referred to as few but large multi-purpose, multi-level, multi-discipline institutions of over 10,000 students. This trend is justified on the basis of economies of scale, viability, cost effectiveness, and efficiency. Developing countries have a long way to go in judiciously manipulating key institutional variables so that they rationalize the size of institutions so as to benefit from economies of scale. These would include adjusting staff-student ratios, academic-administration ratios, salaried and nonsalaried budget ratios, cutting wastage and inefficiencies in cafeterias, garages, maintenance, transport, and housing. In general, and in the short run, the areas of internal evaluations for possible savings could include: not filling unnecessary positions falling vacant, transforming positions from senior administrative (hence expensive) to junior positions, weeding out deadwood through early retirement, increase in class size, contracting some services, increase in teaching load, and savings on energy and communications (Crepo, 1989). All

these processes need to be conducted in open and continuous debates such that any cuts are not perceived as vindictive or done in bad faith. What need to be avoided are the normative prescriptions which do not take into account the specific institutional cultures and social milieu. As the crisis gets under control, long-term policies and management strategies will need to be introduced, crisis management styles relaxed, such that ultimately institutional sustainability is achieved.

The Proximity of the State

Mazrui (1978) decries the proximity between the universities and the national structure of power which in African situations has tended to curtail academic freedom and hence intellectual expansion among students and staff. Besides the informal infiltration of spies into university committees, classrooms, and meetings, the appointment of chief executive officers of universities is also done in the context and pretext of ensuring the security of the state and political survival of current leadership which fears that university autonomy will lead to more dissent (Altbach, 1983). As Young observed, 'To preempt the risk of university as a locus for anti-regime activity, and to ensure the responsiveness of universities to government defined priorities, the choice of administrative leadership becomes particularly important' (p.151). Many of these appointees are suspected state spies. Some universities such as UNZA (Zambia) have institutionalized procedures whereby an aggrieved employee who has been relieved from university employment by university organs, including the Council, can appeal to the Chancellor who makes a final decision without any obligation to assign reasons for it (UNZA, 1990). The university has sometimes found its hands tied that way. It cannot get rid of deadwood. Likewise, appointments to the University Council and the Senate are done in the same spirit. The former President of Tanzania, J.K. Nyerere, had the audacity of appointing his own Press Secretary, a white lady, Ms. Joan Wicken to the Senate of the University of Dar-es-Salaam. Her presence was greatly resented by Senators who would often retort, 'So what?'

whenever she said: 'I don't think the Chancellor will agree on this one'. While some aspect of this proximity was meant to give the university a clout, patronage, and prominence in national affairs, it has been thoroughly abused by fragile regimes, and thus undermined university 'discretion and autonomy' (Mihyo, 1990). One critic of the situation put it this way, 'Universities have had little opportunity to control their pattern of growth and manage their affairs in an autonomous fashion' (Fine, 1990, p.14).

Yet the problem is not the involvement of the state *per se* but rather the extent and manner of the interferences. The surveillance in some campuses is quite crude, to say the least. Some heads of state have the audacity to dictate the nature of examinations students should be given, the cut off point for university entry, and how many students are to be admitted over and above the existing capacity. This has made university teaching one of the most frustrating jobs ever.

With the collapse of militant radical debates associated with the more revolutionary experiments aimed at delinking the African universities from the metropole, and sometimes from global capitalist systems (Hayhoe, 1989; Sidel, 1982), and the emergence of debates focusing on political, social, and economic pluralism, the proximity of the state will need to be revisited and given a new definitions, role, and parameters. Given that education, by its very nature, is a political enterprise, and that it will remain predominantly funded by the state in most countries, it is neither practicable, nor justifiable that the public does not participate in its affairs. In fact, both university autonomy and freedom will be enhanced if the public knows that the university is open to public review and criticism. The problem in African countries is that such interference is always suspect. Mazrui (1978) captures this contradiction between participatory democracy so much cherished by universities, and institutional autonomy, also very much valued. Academic freedom and university autonomy on the one hand emphasize freedom from interference, and academic democracy on the other hand concerns the right for people to participate in its governance

and the definition of its mandate. The problem is that one cannot have one and leave the other. Yet mechanisms can be designed to ensure the satisfactory participation of both parties although the realities of African politics would point to the contrary.

The state will always be interested in higher education for its own survival, and therefore education will continue to be used as a political instrument for authoritarian control but as Young (1990) suggested, authoritarianism has to be seen in a continuum of hard to soft authoritarianism as may be represented by Malawi, Kenya, Ethiopia on one hand and Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe on the other. Education in general, and universities in particular survive better under soft authoritarianism if not under free democracy. It is hoped that political regimes in Africa will soon go plural and hence become soft and democratic to allow for the emergence of new forms of university governance and relations with the state.

In this context, Figure 2 may provide a model for different countries attempting to articulate a power balance between the state, the professorate, and market forces. Many problems in developing countries result from this power play. Each corner of the triangle represents the extreme of one of the three forces. When an academic oligarchy rules, professors are like barons, quite powerful, independent, and influential in the state bureaucracy but may not necessarily respond judiciously to market forces. When market forces operate, most decisions are made on a competitive basis including the hiring of top university administrators, deans, and heads of departments. Curriculum offerings are greatly shaped by the wishes of the clients, who include students, parents, and employers. Students are free to choose which university to go to and which programme to follow.

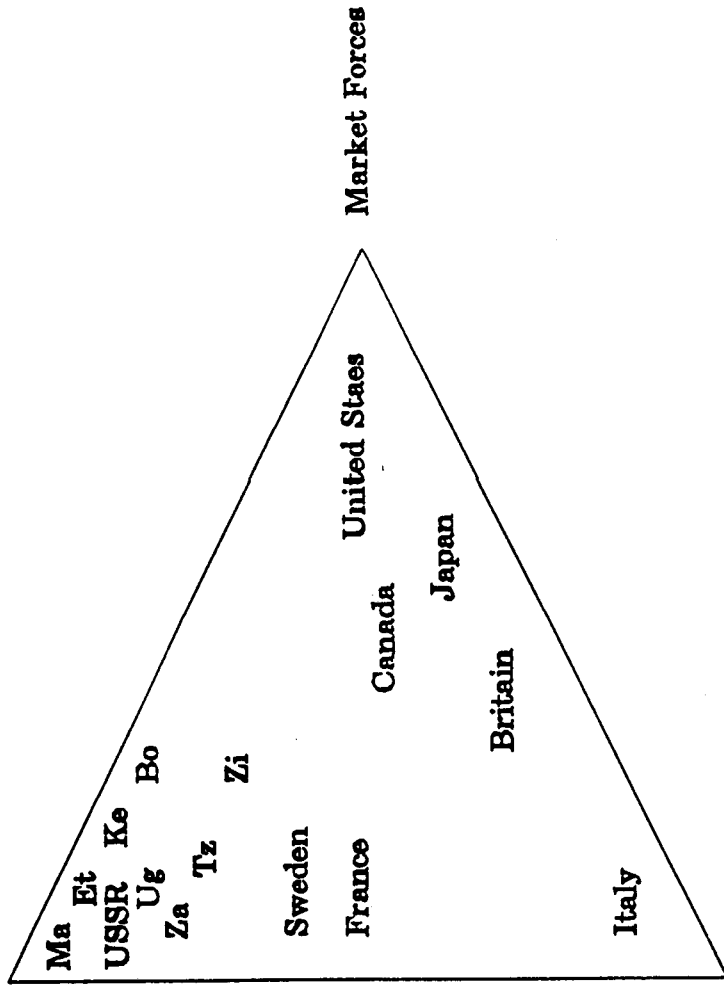
In a setting where the state determines the character and operations of universities, most of the fundamental decisions relating to hiring, enrolments, growth patterns, and curriculum offerings are determined by the state. The extreme form of this kind of

intervention is when the state can hire and fire the chief executive of a university without any explanation. Obviously the extremes of any of these three parameters may be undesirable but a happy combination of them can be cultivated and delicately balanced. Independent intermediary bodies such as university grant commissions, higher education authorities, accreditation bodies, standing university committee are often designed to play mediational roles between the three extremes.

However, most African universities tend to gravitate towards the Russian model of state intervention in all major decisions. In some countries such as Tanzania, even the dean of a faculty has to be confirmed by the head of state. History has not given unqualified support to the Russian model and in fact, it is currently undergoing fundamental changes. African countries have to create their own models of universities and develop them firmly in the direction that all parties are comfortable with, but ultimately, academic freedom and institutional autonomy remains the sinequo non of a university worth the label.

Recent rethinking on restructuring of higher education sees governments being involved in broad policy measures relating to planning processes, budgetary levels, and a framework for accountability. The responsibility for growth patterns and rates, innovations, diversification and internal administration and management is left to individual institutions. Policies are geared towards issues of viability, sustainability, enhancement of autonomy, flexibility, responsiveness, dependability of funding, competitiveness, effectiveness, efficiency, accountability and responsibility in decision making processes (Goedegebuune and Meek, 1991). The concept of dependability of the funding environment has been particularly highlighted in recent times. Indeed, the problem in some African universities has been the ad hoc manner in which policy and funding decisions are made, often depending on friendship and the ability to argue a case out rather than real need, thus making universities unable to plan for what was to happen even in a year to come (Goma, 1989). Universities need to negotiate guidelines and a time frame for funding such that the

State Authority



Key: Ke=Kenya; Bo=Botswana; Et=Ethiopia; Ma=Malawi
Tz=Tanzania; Ug=Uganda; Za=Zambia; Zi=Zimbabwe.

Figure 2 The Triangle of Authority in University System

Adapted from Clark (1983)

funding environment is dependable and predictable. Emphasis is on the planning process through mutuality and dialogue rather than confrontational and the use of static plans which are proving useless. The funding strategies and culture, especially in the context of the World Bank inspired structural adjustment programmes, have resulted in what Reimer (1991) has called a siege mentality and a culture of cuts rather than long-term strategies and social policies aimed at institutional recovery and sustainability.

Funding Formulas and Ratios

The current crisis in higher education is obviously in part related not only to the amount of resources devoted to the sector but the manner in which the resources are dished out. All reports suggests an adhoc approach whereby much depends on power relations, influence, and patronage. A serious consideration of funding mechanisms, which ensures stability, efficiency, and responsiveness can be found in Albrecht and Ziderman (1991). In a broad sense, part of the negotiations for a dependable funding environment should include national level issues, such as:

- The proportion of GNP devoted to education. Advocacy for education's share of national wealth cannot be left to one ministry (education) alone. The university community needs to be involved in advocacy for more resources for education.
- The proportion of the annual public expenditures devoted to education. Again, the total education community and the university in particular have to play an advocacy and a monitoring role for a fair share of the annual budgets.
- The proportion of annual recurrent budget devoted to education and the amount that will end up in higher education. This will be predictable too.

- After how many years should the university come up with some capital expenditure budget, and what proportion of the annual university budget should be set aside for capital expenditures? Elements of predictability will reduce frustrations and the ad hoc manner universities have currently developed.
- What will be the funding modality - large block grants or a line item approach, and what flexibility should universities have in moving funds from one budget line to another? Will the university get annual transfers of funds or quarterly or half yearly? Annual transfers are better for planning and reinvestment.
- Will external funds be substitutes for government funds or will they always remain supplementary to university entitlement, and can the government raise matching funds as incentives when universities attract external/independent funding?
- What will be the funding formula? For instance, most common formulas use enrolment figures for full-time student equivalents weighed by programme or degree level, institutional type, disciplinary/sector grouping, and geographical location of institutions (Darling, *et al*, 1989). In this way, one ensures a fair and equitable distribution of resources as one have equivalent funding for equivalent programs and equivalent institutions.
- Will funding be skewed (given scarce resources and national needs) in favour of certain areas such as the sciences (e.g. Nigeria wants 60:40 in favour of the sciences, Shittu, 1990); applied sciences, technologies, computer sciences, business, and medicine. In this way funding is used as a mechanism for adjusting programmes and enrolments towards areas of greater national needs.

- What will be the balances and compromises in areas of emphasis such as hard and pure sciences(chemistry), soft and pure disciplines (English and music); hard and applied sciences (engineering); and soft and applied disciplines (law, education). How about balances between vocational and basic education, content and methods, research and teaching, given that the dominant ideology in universities is that teaching and research benefit each other in a mutually reinforcing manner (Moses, 1990). Yet there are great variations in traditions and purposes of given institutions, and there are potential clashes when teaching becomes a nuisance in the face of research money or when research becomes a liability for institutions geared towards professional training for service (e.g. accounting). Obviously hierarchical and lateral differentiation of institutions require differential expectations too (Scott, 1989).
- What will be the emphasis in accountability? Governments everywhere are making the point that autonomy and accountability are complementary rather than conflictual and contradictory. They are asking universities to set up acceptable procedures and standards for accountability so that the public (tax payer) will be convinced that universities are doing a good job. Many universities are accepting the challenge so long as the nature of their enterprise is taken into account, and they are a participating party in deciding on the criteria, procedures, and standards of excellence in service. The set of criteria used for accountability purposes would tend to include:
 - balance between teaching, research, and service to communities;
 - efficiency in the management of resources;

- balance in budgets between faculties and service (administration), and many are accepting a break of 70 to 30 percent;
 - balance between salaries and benefits on the one hand, and non-salary expenditures on the other, many are using 80:20 ratio;
 - comprehensive regular reviews focusing on such indicators as equity in workload; demographic profiles of staff, provisions for the advancement of the disabled and minority students, gender balance, staffing ratios, budget ratios, adherence to legal provisions in higher education legislation, peer reviews; institutional reviews such as triennial and external examiners reports, decentralization and delegation of authority, satisfaction and acceptance by the public, impact and service, image of the university, working environment, protection of assets, and what Tausing (1991) has called overall management direction and appropriateness.
- Above all, what will be the legislative framework for the operations of higher education? The recent crisis in Zimbabwe, leading to violent student protests and academic processions on parliament buildings (*New Africa*, March, 1991, p.19) is a case in point. The university community showed it had no faith, respect, and trust in the legitimization provisions. The Dean of Law in that university, reviewing the Parliamentary actions to take away the freedoms of the universities by vesting appointing authority in the Minister of Education and disciplinary powers in the Vice-Chancellor, called the Act: 'a sure road to ruin; a national disaster, ... one of the present government's greatest blunders ...' (Makamure, 1991). Obviously, a university cannot be expected to

blossom without a respectable legal mechanism that provides a framework for accountability (Wohlstetter, 1991). When the legal mechanism which regulate the distribution of power and state intervention in university affairs has no legitimacy in universities, one can only expect continued tensions which may not encourage efficiency in university operations. Recent worldwide reviews of this area by Golschmidt (1978) highlight the importance of legitimacy and mutuality in relations between the state and the academia as being crucial for excellence in university education and service.

Power, Authority, and Legitimation in the Academia

The well known researcher in higher education, Professor B. R. Clark, cited what he called a wise man who at one time said: 'You have to start thinking from the right end'. He was cautioning against any analysis of higher education which tend to suggest that one needs only to focus on the inputs and outputs, clear policies, efficiency, and decent administration at the top. It is becoming increasingly clear that to know why the quality of the products of universities is poor, one will need to know the nature of the curriculum, quality of instruction, and the associated university practices. This requires that there should be a delineation of the processes indicators such as organizational characteristics, capturing the contextual environments, right from their national character to university classroom quality (Porter, 1991). It does not seem plausible that one can talk about magical ratios or minimum resources required for an effective institution since one can always do more with less and vice versa but yet quality remain the same or deteriorates. Ball (1990) makes one important point that quality in education is a more or less robust trait found in the process of administering, teaching, learning, and research, and not a static trait found in individuals. To effect any significant changes one needs to examine these processes more closely. This will require analyses of the interactions of the key actors, which characterize

the production and reproduction of the organizational realities of institutions of higher learning. Administration, anywhere, consists of social formations structured by power relations, and involves processes which generate or destroy commitment, dialogue among stakeholders, advocacy, and energies for resource mobilization and the search for excellence (Ganesh,1979). It very much depends on how the process is handled.

In developing countries, it is not always clear where the power and authority for steering a dynamic process for institutional recovery and renewal is. Legitimate questions have to be asked about the role of:

- The Chancellors, who often happen to be the Presidents of the country, but who are either too busy, or afraid, or ignorant of their role in the universities such that they play a minimal advocacy role.
- The Ministries of Education, which often have a limited mandate to guide universities, and have very weak departments of higher education, thus failing to give guidance and inspiration to universities.
- The University Councils, which are heard of more during student crises, of ten criticised as being passive and too big for policy formulation and quality monitoring. They need to balance between representation and expeditious and efficient decisions making. Vice-Chancellors may wish to review their role in the appointment of Councillors as they need, committed, knowledgeable, and concerned members.
- The Senate, which concentrates on academic matters often too big, and consisting of Deans of faculties and heads of departments but not necessarily the senior professors in the institutions. The Musangi (1980) Commission report found inadequacy in Senate as it was filled with young heads of departments at the exclusion of senior professors, and was too large for managerial functions. By its nature, it was constantly

changing as new heads of departments got appointed, thus depriving it of expertise, continuity and stability.

- The Vice-Chancellors. These are the pivots around which institutions spin. They are supposed to be both chief executive officers and politicians, who are expected to

enter the national polity through the Councillors, the Minister of Education, and their Chancellors. They have, according to Mauer (1976) to be educated persons with a fundamental understanding of the broad divisions of knowledge, with technical skills for the management of facilities, buildings, budgets, and providing leadership for both the intellectuals and the administration, with impartiality, integrity, and sound judgement. Recent reviews of the positions of university Presidents/Vice-Chancellors suggested that these positions were not only the most powerless but also the most difficult jobs, dealing with shrinking budgets, faculty and student intrigues political and imbedded issues. At the same time, it was the least appreciated job, and in Africa, where Presidents/Vice-Chancellors are appointed and fired at the pleasure of the heads of state, it has resulted in the worst forms of personal humiliation for some of the best brains in the continent.

The Faculties and Departments

Yet if one was concerned about the quality of university outputs, one should concentrate energies and resources in the academic wing of the institutions, consisting of the faculties and departments. This is where, given the ambiguity, anarchy, and non-hierarchical administration characteristic of the academia, any fluidity and weaknesses can result in catastrophic outcomes. This is where positive belief systems, academic qualities and intellectual cultural values have to be strengthened if quality outcomes are to be guaranteed. In some countries such as Sweden, the line positions of deanship and departmental headship are recognized as being so important that regular training seminars are conducted for them

(Jalling, 1989). As can be seen in Table 9, in many universities in Africa, characteristically, the heads of departments and the deans of faculties are junior members of staff at lecturer and senior lecturer levels. This happens often even in departments where there are professors.

It is not that professors do not want to be heads and deans but these institutions had two problems to deal with in earlier times.

- Firstly, the winds of institutional democracy in North America in the 1960s dictated that academic leadership should be democratic, hence the electoral procedures for deanship and headship but not beyond that. When many North American and European universities abandoned the electoral system in favour of research committees and consultative processes, many African institutions retained the electoral mechanism. This has had varying impacts ranging from disasters to lukewarm success in maintaining quality in management, teaching and research.
- Secondly, the pressure to indigenize in a situation where most of the senior positions were occupied by expatriates, necessitated the lowering of the eligibility level for deanship and headship to either lectureship as in Zimbabwe, or senior lectureship as in Tanzania. This has resulted in either younger and junior fellows being elected by their young colleagues as a way of control and influence, or the Vice-Chancellors appointing young and junior fellows as heads and deans as this ensures patronage, influence, and control over faculty and departmental matters. So there is no pressure to change the eligibility level for occupying these positions even when situations have changed.

The combination of the two processes has resulted in the worst perversion of intellectual traditions leading to low morale; retreat and resignation among professors who are avoiding

tiring procedures and aimless debates with either an illegitimate administration or junior fellows; brain drain for lack of academic role models;

Table 9: Departmental Chairmanship by Rank

Institution	CHAIRMANSHIP					
	Others	Assistant Lecturers	Lecturers	Senior Lecturers	Associate Professors	Professors
University of Dar-es-Salaam	0	0	13	30	17	9
University of Nairobi	0	0	11	34	19	5
University of Zimbabwe	2	0	38	20	6	9
University of Addis Ababa	2	1	22	32	23	3
University of Zambia	0	0	24	12	3	7

Source: 1990/91 University Calendars and Prospectuses

lack of excellence and academic values in administration; paralysis in decision making; and decay in departmental and faculty administration. In some countries, the electoral process has lost both its democratic values and intellectual credibility as individuals resort to bribing and buying votes among students, support staff, and junior fellows. In some, countries contenders visit witchdoctors, jujumasters and voodoo cults in their bid to be elected or promoted to senior positions as observed by the famous journalist, David Martin, in Mazrui (1978). In some universities contenders physically fight it out, prompting Professor Musangi (1980), now the Vice-Chancellor of Egerton University, to conclude in a university commission that:

We have observed that the election of Deans in recent past has generated a lot of heat ... and the wrangles ... have affected the morale of academic community and created an impression that the institution has been turned into a political circus. (p.26).

The roles of the deans of faculties as an important academic line position, would include, besides being a good teacher and a role model for researchers, the following:

- faculty development - both programmes and infrastructure;
- staff development in different disciplines, academic traditions, and levels;
- academic leadership and coordination of departments;
- liaison with governments, donors, and the private sector;
- planning and budgetary allocations;
- Institutional representation;
- students development and organization;
- solicitation for additional funds and research grants.

The heads of departments which are the key operating units in any university, have more limited authority but still require the same dual allegiance to the university and to the outside community, entailing accountability in departmental performance and credibility in responding to external pressures and initiatives. In Africa, there is an added responsibility of what Court (1990) called melding of different training traditions among staff. Figure 3 gives some of the roles and training needs presented in Jalling (1989). A young faculty member, still struggling to make it in research and teaching, and aspiring to climb the ladder to the heights of the professorate will have to make a lot of compromises between realities and ideals when placed in positions of institutional leadership. A recent British Council (1991) consultancy report at the University of Zambia strongly recommended the training of Deans and Heads of Department as these are key line positions and yet despite of the lack of experience and academic seniority, there was no training for them at all. This contributed to institutional weaknesses.

With respect to power and authority, it is now widely acknowledged that universities are extremely archaic organizational structures. Formal power does not exist, but formal authority without power seems to be abundant. Traditionally, there are two ways of ensuring that authority and power conflate in the academia as that is the only way of ensuring that things happen in the best of all traditions. This was achieved by having leadership by:

- Appointment, on the basis of merit derived from academic and administrative excellence and prowess. This process was made sacrosanct by the legitimizing powers of either search committees of the Senate or other legitimate and porous consultative processes. This applied to professorial chairs, heads of schools, deans of faculties, and endowed chairs.
- Election of faculty deans and heads of departments. This practice, which came into effect after the 1960/70 university management crisis, was meant to be conducted among the senior members of the academic group, basically among professors, and hence the notion of *primus inter pares* (first among equals/peers/colleagues). This might have sounded undemocratic but had the purpose of ensuring the legitimacy of leadership which is so essential for institutional functionality.

In many African universities there are neither search committees nor professorial guilds, nor elections among equals for leadership positions. In some places, the choice of heads of department is very unpredictable and vice-chancellors appoint and change them purely on a personal relations basis rather than on the basis of intellectual and administrative demands of the unit, and often ignore the wishes of members of the department. Thus issues of legitimacy, power and authority are often raised. It is now self-evident that legitimacy defines the authority which justifies any use of power or

command (Bell, 1971). A head of an academic department may have extensive formal (paper) authority but cannot fully exercise it because his informal status among colleagues is too low and thus his power to influence decisions is greatly limited. Conversely, a head may have no formal authority but may exercise a lot of power and influence because his status is high. These are the realities of a non pyramidic governance structure an the academia where power is inherent in both expertise and liberal participatory norms.

Sometimes charismatic authority may play a compensatory role for either low status or a lack of formal power but this wild card of authority comes in the form of a gift of grace that institutions cannot count on. In the final analysis, while authority refers to power vested in any office or role, it is power as a property of social relations residing in respect for intellect, and the manner of conduct that can be counted on. Universities cannot rule by formal power as they do not have it other than the reluctant threat of expulsion and delay of promotion. It is very important therefore that the leadership in faculties and departments be addressed more seriously since ultimately it is the legitimacy of authority and power that will determine excellence in service, productivity, and retention of quality staff. The former Ford Foundation Nairobi Chief recently observed the situation in Africa this way:

As a result of staff attrition, faculties are increasingly concentrated at the junior level, possessing limited experience and few mentors to guide them. The quality of university teaching, research, and administration all suffer as a consequence. (Saint, 1990, p.4).

Figure 3: Roles and Perceived Needs of Academic Heads of Departments

Communicator	Evaluator	Manager-administrator
Teacher	Motivator	Supervisor
Mentor	Judge	Co-ordinator
Researcher	Decision-maker	Counsellor
Leader	Planner	Organiser
Representer	Negotiator-mediator	Entrepreneur
Peer-colleague	Peace-maker	Catalyst
Politician-diplomat	Model	Recruiter
Interpreter	Problem-solver	

Finance

Skills related:

- Acquiring and allocating resources
- Understanding financial procedures
- Setting up budgetary systems
- Financial management: control and accountability

Contracting

Morale/motivation in:

- Contracting climate
- Protecting vulnerable small departments
- Management of change

Office

- Organization and management systems
- Computer skills training
- Office relations

Inter-personal

- Negotiation
- Handling committees
- Lobbying public relations
 - Gaining consent/consensus
 - Conflict resolution
 - Communication

Personnel

- Disciplinary procedures
- Delegation
- Interview techniques (varied)
- Handling redundancy
- Employment legislation appraisal

Leadership

- Styles
- Models: elected, rotating, appointed chair
- Successful examples skills
- Roles - leadership and university goals
- Leadership and authority

Academic Planning

- Research management and stimulation
- Assessing scholarship in economic terms
- Establishing departmental priorities
- Balancing academic priorities against financial constraints

Time

- Individual and collective time management
- Task analyses and time management

Universities

- Organizational comparisons: international, external
 - Changing roles and purposes

Adapted from Jalling (1989)

Restoration of Stability and Credibility

In the short run it might prove expensive but there seems to be no shortcut to massive external infusion of both financial and intellectual resources to many of these universities in Sub-Saharan Africa. The financial resources will be needed first for staff development to upgrade the existing staff, training new staff to cover the shortfall resulting from the brain drain, and diversification of programmes; secondly, for modernization of the management practices currently in place, including introduction of new technologies and management information systems. Likewise, resources should go to update and upgrade libraries and bookshops. The intellectual resources would be in the form of endowed chairs, visiting scholars, visiting professors and senior research fellows. The changing political ecology is likely to be more accommodating to diversity of views and intellectual traditions than the paranoid atmosphere of the cold war era. This infusion could be in the form of an Africa Intellectual Reconstruction Fund. This seems to be the only way to revive a credible and competitive intellectual climate. Some of the senior natives who went out of their countries either as economic refugees or political exiles may now be ready to return on externally funded fellowships. Donor agencies should seriously consider them for such contractual work in selected universities in any reverse brain drain initiatives. This may conflict with national or university policies which do not allow for locals to be employed on externally financed salaries, and might tamper with an already dampened morale if the salary differences are too high but yet, attracting the best of the African intellectuals now in the international market will need that kind of intervention. Such scholars could be the locus for a spirited revitalization of research, graduate programmes, and academic discourse, and they only need to be in the region rather than in their specific countries.

Both Coombe (1991) and Hirji (1990) give vivid descriptions of the impacts of the political and economic crisis on the teaching staff. The majority of them, they say, are paying allegiance to externalities and personal survival motives rather than common

purposes relating to national and institutional recovery strategies. Coombe (1990) who found teaching staff still keen to do their work captures the climate in most succinct terms this way:

What they talk about with animations is their inability to do the job they are trained to do, hired to do, and want to do. Many African academics suffer a loss of professional esteem. Of all the casualties of the years of austerity in African universities the damage to morale is particularly serious. Erosion of working and living conditions has driven some academics to seek refuge in cynicism, venality, actual and psychic, dereliction of duty and opportunism (p.3).

Some of the issues in Coombe's analysis were perceived long ago in 1974 by students at the University of Dar-es-Salaam who wrote to the then Vice-Chancellor Mr. P. Msekwa, to complain of poor working conditions for staff, ethnicism, racism, and a lack of freedom of speech, with the conclusion that, 'unless the trend is reversed, we may very shortly find the university too impotent to realize those noble objectives for which it was established' (Shinganya, 1974, p.6). The perseverance of these issues in African university might suggest a need for more drastic and concerted measures involving both the state, the international community, and the university on an ongoing basis rather than one short affair. Otherwise the gap in research technology, knowledge production, and technological innovation will get even wider than hitherto.

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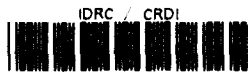
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